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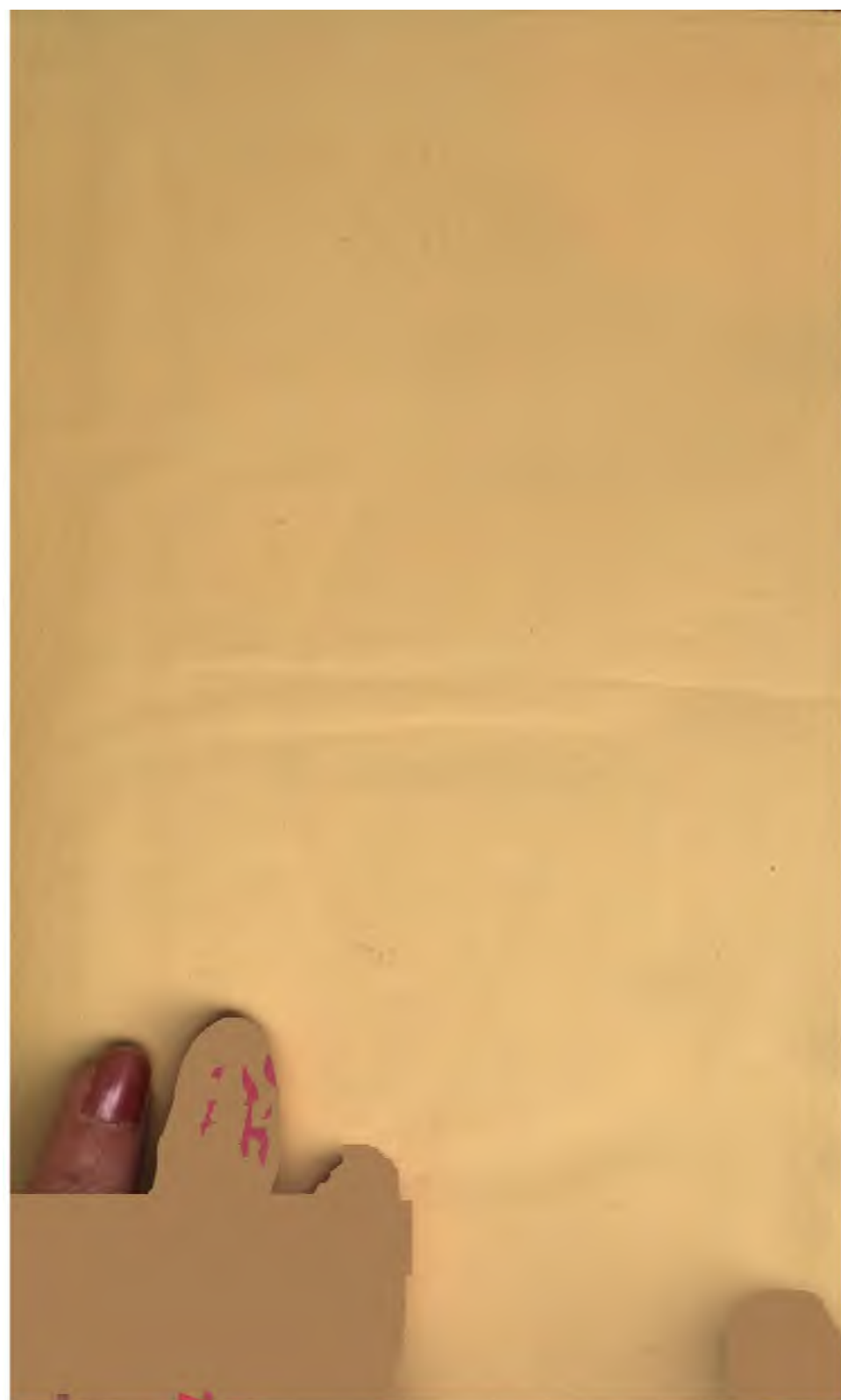




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THE
PLENARY INSPIRATION
OF
THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

THEOPNEUSTIA.

THE
PLENARY INSPIRATION
OF THE
HOLY SCRIPTURES.

FROM THE FRENCH OF L. GAUSSEN.

"Queritur—an, in scribendo, ita acti et inspirati fuerint à Spiritu Sancto, et quoad res ipsas, et quoad verba, ut ab omni errore immunes fuerint: adversarii negant; nos affirmamus."—*Turretini*.

LONDON:
SAMUEL BAGSTER AND SONS,
AT THE
WAREHOUSE FOR BIBLES, NEW TESTAMENTS, BOOKS OF COMMON PRAYER,
CONCORDANCES, & LEXICONS, IN ANCIENT & MODERN LANGUAGES.

PARIS: L. R. DELAY.

Πολλὰ μὲν θνητοῖς γλῶτται μὴ δ' ἀθανάτοισιν.

1841.

1175.



LONDON :

R. CLAY, PRINTER, BREAD STREET HILL.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Publishers desired to have presented this Volume to the English Public soon after the appearance of the Work in French; and prepared a Translation; but about the time of the completion of this, a second French edition was announced. The English translation referred to was consequently reserved until the appearance of the second French edition should afford the Publishers the opportunity of embodying the emendations and corrections of the Author. This Translation now appears BEFORE the publication of *the second edition of THE ORIGINAL*, because, through the kindness of the Author and his Publisher, M. Delay, of Paris, the important alterations and corrections intended for the future French edition, have been forwarded in *manuscript* to the Publishers of the present Work, before being placed in the hands of the French printer.

This translation, therefore, possesses all the advantages of the Author's careful reconsideration of the first edition of his Work.

15, PATERNOSTER ROW,
Dec. 10, 1841.

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PREFACE.

THIS Work and its title may, at first sight, give rise, in some minds, to two prepossessions equally erroneous. These I desire to dispel.

As the Greek term "Theopneustos," though adopted from St. Paul,¹ and long employed beyond the Rhine, has not yet been used generally, more than one reader may doubtless say to himself, with respect to the subject here treated of, that it is too scientific to be popular, and too little popular to be important. I do not, however, hesitate to declare, that if any thing has at once given me both the desire and the courage to undertake the Work, it is the two-fold persuasion of its vital importance, and of its simplicity.

Next to the knowledge of the Divine origin of Christianity, I do not think we can be presented

¹ 2 Tim. iii. 16.

with a question more essential to the existence of our faith than this :—“ Is the Bible from God ? Is it entirely from God ? Or, is it true (as has been affirmed) that it contains sentences purely human, inaccurate narrations, vulgar conceits, defective arguments ; in a word, certain books which, in whole or in part, are at variance with the interests of faith ; the offspring of rashness in the writers, and tainted with error ? ” This is the decisive fundamental question ; a question of life ! It is the first with which we have to do on opening the Scriptures ; and it is that with which our religion should begin.

If it be true, on the one hand, that *all* which the Bible contains is not important, affects not the faith, and does not relate to Jesus Christ ; and if, also, it be true, that there is in this Book nothing inspired, but what in the reader’s judgment, is of importance, does affect faith, and relates to Jesus Christ ; then is such a Bible a totally different book to the Bible of the Fathers, the Reformers, and the saints of every age. This is fallible ; theirs was perfect. This contains chapters or portions, sentences or expressions, to be excepted from those which are from God : theirs was the altogether inspired Word ; “ the entire Scripture given by inspiration of God, and profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in right-

eousness ; that the man of God might be perfect, through faith in Christ Jesus." Thus the same passage would be esteemed as widely different from what it is in theirs, as earth is distant from heaven. Such latitudinarians will open at the forty-fifth Psalm, or the Song of Solomon, and will there perceive nothing but the most human of things terrestrial—a bridal ode ; or the tender yearnings of a daughter of Sharon for her beloved ; while believers see therein the glory of the Church, the embraces of God's love, and the inexhaustible fulness of Jesus ; in a word, whatever there is most divine in the things of heaven ; and even if they fail to perceive them, they know that therein they are displayed, and there they continue to seek them.

Suppose one of Paul's Epistles to be selected for our consideration. Whilst one of us attributes a particular sentence (the meaning of which he does not comprehend, or which shocks his carnal sense,) to the Jewish prejudices of the writer, to intentions purely vulgar, and to circumstances entirely human ; the other, with reverential deference, will explore the thoughts of the Holy Ghost, which he believes to be perfect, before even he has been led to the understanding of them, and will impute to his own ignorance only, any apparent unimportance or obscurity.

Thus, whilst in the Bible of the one, every thing

has its end, its place, its beauty, and its use ; complete, like a tree with its branches, foliage, fibres and coverings ; the Bible of the other is as a tree in whose creation and development there is no trace of Divine workmanship.

But still further. Not only, according to such a perverted view, must we have two Bibles, but there would remain the difficulty of ascertaining what would be considered as indeed the Bible.

It is only in a certain degree, say you, that it is human and fallible ; but who is to define this degree ? If it be true that man, in mingling his sad notions, has left therein traces of defilement, who is to determine the extent of what is counterfeit, and the depth of this defilement ? You say, a portion of it is human ; but what are the limits of this portion ? and who will define them for us ? Can any one ? Each must assign them for himself at the pleasure of his own judgment ; that is to say, the less we are enlightened by the Spirit of God, the greater should we consider the extent of this *fallible* portion of the Scriptures ; and a man would deprive himself of the Divine Word in the very proportion that he has need of it ; just as we see idolaters, who make their deities so much the more impure as they are themselves strangers to the living and holy God. Thus each would reduce the inspired writings to different proportions ; and

making a Bible, thus corrected by himself, an infallible rule, would say to it, "Guide me henceforth, for thou art my counsellor." Like the framers of graven images, spoken of by Isaiah, who make to themselves a god, and bow down to it, crying, "Deliver me, for thou art my god." (Isa. xlv. 17.)

Nor is this all; there are yet more important considerations. According to such reasoning, it is not the Bible only that is uncertain, but its possessors too. Yes, even before the very passages which you have most admired, you could neither maintain the attitude nor the heart of a believer. How could this be, after having cited those passages, equally with the rest of Scripture, to the bar of your own judgment, to be declared divine, or partially divine, or not divine at all? What, upon your minds, can be the authority of any portion of the word, the whole of which is to you infallible only by virtue of your own decision? Were not the portions you admire arraigned by you, side by side with those parts which you have adjudged to be more or less human? Will your minds sincerely take the humble and teachable position of a disciple, after having occupied that of a judge? It is not possible. The obedience you would render to it might, perhaps, be that of acquiescence, but never that of faith; of approval, but not of adoration. You profess, say you, to believe in

the divinity of a particular passage ; it is not, however, in God that you believe, but in yourselves ! The passage in question pleases, but does not govern you ; it influences, but does not rule you : it is before you as a lamp, but not in you as an unction from on high—a living principle—a fountain of life. I doubt whether either of the popes, even the most absolute in his ideas of sacerdotal power, could, with confidence, address prayer to one departed, upon whom, in the plenitude of his authority, he had himself conferred canonization. In like manner, how can a reader of the Bible, who, on his own authority, has just admitted the inspiration of a sentence, (however confident he may be in his own wisdom,) stand in regard to such sentence, in the disposition of a sincere believer ? Will his mind descend from the pontifical chair to humble itself before those words, which, but for the exercise of its own judgment, would have remained human, or at least doubtful ? No man can discover the full meaning of any passage when he has himself given it authority by virtue of some particular sense already discovered. A very imperfect submission is yielded to an authority which might have been set aside, or which has been rendered doubtful. What has been degraded, will be but imperfectly adored.

Moreover (and it demands especial notice), the

entire divinity of various parts of Scripture, depending, in your estimation, not upon the simple fact of their being found in the book of the oracles of God, but upon that degree of spirituality and wisdom with which you have yourselves invested them, the decision to which you come can scarcely be so entirely exempt from uncertainty, as that you will feel your minds wholly free from the doubts you entertained when first you approached their consideration. Hence your faith must, necessarily, partake of your incertitude, and be in itself imperfect, wavering, and conditional ! According to your decision will be your faith ; and according to your faith will be your life ! But such are not the faith and life of the elect of God !

What, however, will more forcibly demonstrate the importance of the question which we are about to consider, is, that if one of the two systems which it involves, has, as we have averred, its roots deeply set in error, the inevitable fruit of this system will be fresh incredulity.

How is it that thousands read the Bible, morning and evening, without ever seeing there the doctrines which it so distinctly inculcates ? How is it that they thus, for years, grope on in darkness with the light of life in their hands ? Do they not regard the Bible as a revelation from heaven ? They do ; but prejudiced by false notions of *Theopneustia*, and

believing that there still exists a mixture of error in the sacred volume, though, at the same time, desirous of finding some rational passages to justify their pronouncing them Divine, they unwittingly study the Scriptures to give them a meaning consonant with their own wisdom ; and thus not only do they incapacitate themselves for recognising the wisdom of God, but they render the Scriptures themselves contemptible in their own estimation. On reading St. Paul's Epistles, for instance, they seek to discover therein the justification of man by the law, his inherent innocence, his disposition to good, the moral power of his will, and the merit of his works. What, then, alas ! ensues ? Why, after having given a forced construction to the sentiments of the sacred writer, they find his language so ill adapted to the end imputed to him, terms so unsuited to what they would make him say, and arguments altogether so inconsequent, that they end, as it were, in spite of themselves, by losing whatever respect they had retained for the words of holy writ, and, finally, plunge headlong into the depths of rationalism. It is thus, that by commencing in incredulity, a new incredulity is engendered, darkness begets darkness, until the fearful word of the Saviour is fulfilled :—" From him that hath not, shall be taken even that which he thinketh he hath."

Such is then, demonstrably, the fundamental importance of the great question now before us. If we adopt the answer which you give to it, the arm of the Lord is shortened towards you, the sword of the Spirit is blunted, and has lost its piercing and dividing power. How, henceforth, can it penetrate to the joints and marrow? How can it be stronger than your lusts, your doubts, the world, and Satan? Can it be to you light, strength, victory, and peace? We answer, No! It might indeed happen, as a pure effect of God's special grace, that, in despite of this unhappy state of soul, a divine word may take hold upon you unawares: then will Zaccheus descend from the sycamore tree,—Matthew will quit the receipt of custom,—the sick of the palsy will take up his bed and walk,—and the dead revive. This might happen, doubtless; but still it would not be less true, that the disposition to sit in judgment on the Scriptures, and to doubt beforehand of their universal inspiration, is one of the most powerful obstacles which can be opposed to their influence. “The word preached (says St. Paul, Hebrews iv. 2) did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it;” whilst the fulness of gospel blessings was always the portion of those who “received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh in those that believe.” (1 Thess. ii. 13.)

It is manifest, therefore, that this question is one of momentous concern as regards the vitality of our faith; and we are justified in saying, that between the two answers which may be given to it, there exists the same contrariety as between two Israelites, who might have seen Jesus Christ in the flesh, and who might equally have acknowledged him to be a prophet, but one of whom, seeing his trade of carpenter, his abject fare, his lowly aspect as the man of sorrows, and his humble followers, would have believed him capable of error and of sin; whilst the other would have hailed him as Emmanuel, the Lamb of God, the Lord our Righteousness, the Holy One of Israel, the King of kings, and Lord of lords.

The reader may not yet acquiesce in each of these considerations; but he will at least admit, that I have advanced sufficient to warrant the conclusion, that such a question is worth the trouble of discussion, and that, in weighing it, we have in our hands the dearest interests of the people of God. I did not contemplate more than this in a preface. Having presented my first object, I shall now proceed to my second.

If the consideration of this doctrine is the duty of all, its study is also within the reach of all; and the author does not shrink from avowing, that in writing this Treatise, his chief ambition has

been to render it accessible to all classes of readers.

He anticipates, however, objections. Some will say, You address yourself to men of science, and your book does not concern us; we hold to religion, but you present us with theology!

It is, doubtless, with theology; but of what kind? With that theology which ought to be the study of every heir of life, and with respect to which even a child ought to be a theologian.

Religion and theology! Let me explain myself; for of these two terms an abuse is often made, to the injury of both, in affecting to oppose them to each other. Is not theology defined in all the dictionaries as—"the science which has for its object God and his revelation?" But when I was at school, I learned from the Youth's Catechism a similar definition of religion, thus:—"Religion is the science which teaches us to know God in Christ." It is evident, therefore, that they do not differ from each other either in object, means, or end. Their object is, truth; their means, the word of God; their end, holiness. "Sanctify them (O Father!) through thy truth: thy word is truth." This is the prayer implied by both, as it was that of their dying Master. What then constitutes the distinction between them? Simply this:—Theology

is religion, more methodically studied, and by the aid of more perfect means.

There is no doubt that under this term Theology, men have succeeded in corrupting the word of God, by mingling therewith philosophy and the traditions of men ; this medley, however, is not theology, but merely school-divinity.

The term Religion, it is true, is not always taken in its objective sense, as signifying the knowledge of the truths of our faith ; but sometimes also in a subjective acceptation, as rather designating the sentiments to which permanence is given, by these truths, in the hearts of believers. Let the distinction between these two senses be preserved, as it can and ought to be : but to oppose them to each other, by calling one Religion and the other Theology, is a deplorable misconception ; it is, in other words, to pretend to have religious sentiments, without having those religious doctrines which alone can inspire them ; it is to wish to be moral, without principles ; pious, without belief ; christian, without Christ ; to have effects, without causes ; and life, without a soul. Unhappy delusion ! “ Holy Father, is not this life eternal,—to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent ? ”

But if it were more in its objective sense that religion is to be compared with theology ; viz., that religion which a Christian acquires from the Bible

in his vernacular tongue, to the religion which a more intellectual man would acquire from the Bible, by the aid of history and the learned languages; still I would say,—draw the distinction between them, but do not set them in opposition. Ought not every sincere Christian to become as much of a theologian as he can? Is he not exhorted to let the word of God dwell in him richly, to be nourished with sound doctrine, and rooted and grounded in the knowledge of Jesus Christ? Was it not to the multitude that Jesus said, “Search the Scriptures?”

Religion, in its objective sense, is, then, just what the sphere is to astronomy. They are distinct, but united; and theology renders to religion the same service that the astronomy of geometers renders to those who navigate the ocean.

The commander of a ship heeds not the mechanism of the heavens in his voyage to the seas of China, or in returning round the globe; nevertheless, in traversing the ocean, it is to this science, though himself imperfectly acquainted with it, he would be indebted for the accuracy of his reckoning, the correctness of his calculations, and the precision with which he is enabled to ascertain his longitudes, and the consequent safety of the course he is pursuing. And so with the christian traveller; in the journey of life towards the rest whither God

has called him, he may dispense with the ancient languages and learned treatises of theology; yet, the very notions of religion which he must necessarily possess, will mainly receive their precision and stability from theological science. And, as he advances to the haven of eternal life, with his eye steadily fixed upon the compass which God has provided, it is, nevertheless, to theology he will owe the assurance that this heavenward magnet is the same that it was in the days of the Apostles; that the charter of salvation has been preserved to him uncorrupted; that its beacons are immutable, and that the needle still points with unerring fidelity.

There was a time when all the sciences were mysterious, and professed in secret, having their initiatory peculiarities, their mystic technicalities, and freemason formulæ. Natural philosophy, geometry, medicine, grammar, and history, were all treated of in the Latin tongue. The learned held intercourse in the zenith, far above the range of the vulgar; and the utmost they did was to let fall a few leaves from their sublime altitude, which we were bound to gather with respect, and regarding which we were not at liberty to exercise any control. But, in the present day, all is changed. Genius has set her glory in being comprehensible to the many; and after having ascended to the ethereal regions of science, there to invade truth in its most

exalted retreat, her powers are employed in meditating a descent, and maintaining a proximity, in order to indicate to us the course she has pursued, and the secrets she has discovered. But if such be, in our day, the almost universal tendency of the human sciences, such was, through all time, the distinctive character of true theology. This is the common property of all. The sciences may exist irrespective of the people, as the people dispense with the sciences; but there is a reciprocal dependence between true theology and the religion of the faithful. Theology is the safeguard of their religion, and their religion is the conservator of theology. Woe to them when theology languishes and fails to make herself heard! Woe to theology when the religion of Christ's flock allows her to walk alone, and disesteems her! We ought then to give heed, for her sake and for theirs, to those things which it is her peculiar province to unfold; she teaches and studies for their free acceptance.

When theology makes known among the people her relations towards them, placing before their eyes the realities of the christian life, and reminding them continually of those spiritual truths—the fall of man, the eternal purpose of the Father, the Cross of the Redeemer, the comfort of the Holy Ghost, holiness and eternity; then, also, the conscience of the Church reclaims their wanderings,

rebukes their rashness, imposes a serious deportment, and corrects the effects of that profane and ready familiarity with which scholastic science meddles with holy things. By daily reminding them of that life to which the preaching of the Cross directs the Church, (and without the knowledge of this life, all science would be as incomplete as the natural history of man acquired among the tombs,) the religion of believers divests theology of its too eager admiration of that knowledge which sanctifieth not. She will often repeat the question put by St. Paul to the foolish Galatians:—"Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" She disentangles theology from the wisdom of man, and imbues it with reverence for the word of God, and (in this holy word) for those doctrines of righteousness and faith, which are the power of God our Saviour, and which ought to penetrate the entire range of science. It is thus that she would employ it to teach men to associate the work of conscience with that of intelligence in their investigations, and never to search into the truth of God, without the concentrated illumination of meditation and prayer.

On the other hand, theology, in its turn, renders services to the christian community, which cannot long be dispensed with without injury. It is theology that watches over the religion of

the people, in order that the priest's lips may keep wisdom, and that they may seek the law at his mouth. It is theology which, in the evangelical ministry, preserves the purity of its principles, and in its preaching maintains the just balance of all its truths. It is theology which fortifies the simple against the hostile assertions of inaccessible science, which bears the answer to the very places whence the objections have been thrown, which scatters the sophisms of opponents, which holds them in awe by her presence, and which compels them to assume a bearing less arrogant before the faithful, and to adopt a more chastened tone. Finally, it is theology which marks the first moment—often so decisive—in which the language of religion among any people begins to be corrupted, and in which error, like a weed just springing, points to its full maturity. Theology gives timely warning of the evil, and hastens to root it out.

Whenever the community has been pious, theology has prospered; she has instructed; she has put honour upon abstruse studies; and to enable us to search the Scriptures, she has not only compassed those sciences which could shed any light upon them, but she has revived every other, either by the example of her own researches, by uniting around her the most elevated minds, or by instilling

into our academic institutions a tone of exalted morality which would be auspicious to its development.

It is thus that in raising the character of learning, theology has often ennobled that of an entire nation.

But, on the contrary, when theology and the people have become indifferent to each other, and slumbering believers have lived only for time, then theology herself has become indolent, frivolous, and barren; or rather, a lover of novelty, seeking, at all risks, a profane popularity; pretending to discoveries which must be circulated in whispers; taught only in academies, but not mentioned in the churches; closing its doors to the people, and, at the same time, scattering on all sides doubts and impieties, as it were to test the depth of public indifference, until, at length, she becomes a scandal, either by attacking the truth, denying the integrity or the inspiration of certain books, or in daring to contradict the facts they narrate.

And let us not imagine that people of all ranks would not soon feel the effects of this grievous evil. They will suffer even in their temporal interests; and their national existence will be thereby compromised. In degrading religion, you proportionably lower the moral character; you rob it of its

life. Among all nations, things are measured by the height at which their heaven is placed. Where this is low, every thing is affected, even on the ground—every thing soon becomes dwarfish and stunted, futurity is contracted, patriotism is materialized, their spirit-stirring traditions fail to animate, moral perception is blunted, selfishness alone is exalted, and every principle of conservation, one after the other, disappears.

We conclude, then, on the one hand, that there exists the most intimate union, not only between the welfare of a nation and its religion, but between its religion and true theology; and, on the other hand, that if it has ever been pre-eminently beneficial that this science should be professed for all and before all, never was this character more necessary to it than in the discussion of the doctrine upon which we are about to enter. It is the doctrine of doctrines—that which teaches us all others, and in virtue of which alone they are doctrines—the doctrine which is the soul of the believer, the air he breathes, and which is necessary for the sustenance of the christian life—necessary for his existence, growth, and perseverance.

Such has been the two-fold idea, under the influence of which this book has been undertaken.

Its whole contents will, I trust, manifest my earnest desire to render it useful to Christians of every class. With this view, I have avoided scholastic rules. Without binding myself not to cite the ancient languages, I have abstained from multiplying quotations. In demonstrating the admirable unanimity of ancient Christianity on this question, I have confined myself to general facts. In arranging the order of the chapters, I have deviated from didactic prescription, to follow a popularly logical course, which commences with objections, and concludes with proofs. Finally, seeing it was necessary to review various questions having relation to this doctrine, I have collectively done so in a special chapter ; and herein, contrary to the opinion of several friends, I have adopted a method which to them appeared at variance with the general character of the book ; but which to me seemed to give my readers a clear and rapid understanding of the subject.

In presenting my production to the church of God, thus simply and practically arranged, I am happy at feeling that I can commit it to the blessing of Him, who preached in the streets, and whose own description to John of his mission was, "to the poor is the gospel preached."

Happy shall I be if these pages should strengthen

in their simplicity and joy of faith those Christians who, though unlearned, have already believed in the entire divinity of the Scriptures! Happy if some weary and heavy-laden mind should be persuaded to give more heed to the voice of God, which speaks to them in every line of the sacred volume! Happy if, through what I have advanced, some travellers to Zion who (like the pilgrim Jacob at Bethel,) having slumbered with too much indifference on the Divine Word, even to weariness, should at last recognise the wondrous ladder which thence rises to heaven, by which alone the messages of grace can descend into their souls, and their prayers ascend to God! Oh! that I may be instrumental to their welcoming with joy and gratitude this sacred revelation, and in constraining them to declare, "Surely the Lord is here! This is the house of God,—this is the gate of heaven."

For myself, I do not hesitate to say, that in the progress of the work, I have often been led to praise God for having called me to it; for I have more than once seen, as it were, the Divine Majesty fill with his glory the temple of the Scriptures. I have seen that raiment of the Son of Man, (to the carnal eye so coarse and common,) "shining, exceeding white as snow, so as no fuller on earth can white them." Often have I seen the Bible resplen-

dent with God's glory, and its every word radiant with divine truth. In a word, I have felt what is ever the experience of those who defend a true and holy cause, that it has increased in truthfulness and majesty the more it has been contemplated. My God, give me to love thy word, and to retain it, as much as thou hast taught me to admire it !

“All flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away ; but the WORD OF THE LORD endureth for ever ; and this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.”

THEOPNEUSTIA.

THE PLENARY INSPIRATION OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

OUR aim, in this Treatise, is, by the help of God and the sole authority of his Word, to set forth, defend, and establish the christian doctrine of *Theopneustia*.

CHAPTER I.

DEFINITION OF THEOPNEUSTOS.

THIS term is given to the mysterious power exercised by the Divine Spirit on the authors of the writings of the Old and New Testament, to enable them to compose that which the church of God has received from their hands. "All Scripture," says an apostle, "is *theopneustic*."¹

This Greek expression was, perhaps, novel, even among the Greeks, at the period when St. Paul employed it. However, if it were so as regards

¹ 2 Tim. iii. 16.

the idolatrous Greeks, it was otherwise with the Hellenistic Jews. The historian Josephus,¹ who was the contemporary of Paul, makes use of a term exactly similar, in his first book against Appion, in which, speaking of all the prophets, "who," he remarks, "have composed the twenty-two sacred books of the Old Testament," he declares, that they wrote *according to pneustia* [or inspiration] *which comes from God*.² And the Jewish philosopher Philo,³ himself contemporary with Josephus, in the narrative which he has left of his embassy to the emperor Caligula, making use also of a term very similar to that of St. Paul, calls the Scriptures "oracles *theócristes*;"⁴ that is to say, oracles given under an *unction from God*.

Theopneustia is not a system, it is a fact; and this fact, like all other events of the history of redemption, is one of the doctrines of our faith.

It is, however, necessary to observe, and it concerns us to understand, that the miraculous operation of the Holy Ghost, had not for its object the sacred writers, who were only its instruments, and would soon pass away; but it had for its object the sacred writings themselves, which were appointed to reveal to the church, throughout all time, the counsels of God, which abide for ever.

The power which then operated in these men of God, and which they themselves experienced in very different degrees, has not been defined to us.

¹ P. 1036. Edition Aurel. Allobr. 1611.

τὴν ἀπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ.

² Κατὰ τὴν ἐπίπνοϊαν

³ P. 1022. Edit. Francof.

⁴ Θεόχριστα λόγια.

There is not any thing to authorize our explaining it. Scripture never presents to us either its mode or its measure, as an object of study. It is spoken of only incidentally, and is not associated with our devotion. What it proposes to our faith is, simply, the inspiration of their word—the divine character of the book which these men have written. In this respect, it establishes no difference between them. Their word, it assures us, is *theopneustic*; their book is of God. Whether they record mysteries antecedent to creation, those of futurity more remote than the return of the Son of Man, the eternal counsels of the Most High, the secrets of the heart of man, or the deep things of God; whether they describe their own emotions, speak of things from recollection, or repeat what has been noted by contemporaries; whether they treat of genealogies, or extract from uninspired documents; their writing is inspired; what they pen is dictated from on High—it is always God who speaks, who relates, ordains, or reveals by their instrumentality, and who, for this purpose, employs, in various degrees, their personality. For it is written, “the Spirit of the Lord has been upon them, and his word is in their mouth.” And if the words are always those of men, because they are written by men, they are, also, always those of God, because it is God who oversees, employs, and guides them. He indites their narrations, doctrines, and commandments, “not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost

teacheth;" and thus it is that God has not only constituted himself the guarantee of all those facts, the author of all those ordinances, and the revealer of all those truths, but he has, moreover, given them to his church in the order, measure, and terms, which he has judged to be best adapted to his heavenly purpose.

If, therefore, it be demanded of us, how this *theopneustic* work was accomplished in these men of God, we should answer, that we know it not; that we ought not to know it; and that it is in this ignorance, and in faith of a like character, that we receive the doctrine of regeneration, or sanctification of a soul by the Holy Spirit. We believe that the Spirit enlightens, purifies, elevates, comforts, and subdues that soul; we acknowledge all these effects; we know and adore their Cause; but we are bound to resign ourselves to perpetual ignorance of the means. Thus let it be with *Theopneustia*.

And if, furthermore, we were required to state, at least, what these men of God experienced in their faculties, will, or understanding, whilst they penned these sacred pages, we answer, that the energy of inspiration was not felt in equal degree by each of them, and that their experience was not uniform; but to this we add that the knowledge of such a fact is almost unimportant to the interests of our faith, because faith has to do with the volume, and not with man.

It is the volume which is inspired, and which is so entirely. This assurance ought to suffice us.

Three classes of persons, in these last times, without disavowing the divine nature of Christianity, and without pretending to except against the authority of the Scriptures, have felt themselves at liberty to reject this doctrine.

The first of these has disowned even the *existence* of this action of the Holy Spirit; the second has denied its *universality*; and the third its *plentitude*.

The first, with Dr. Schleiermacher,¹ Dr. De Wette, and several other German theologians, rejects all miraculous inspiration, and will only concede to the sacred writers what Cicero attributes to the poets, *afflatum spiritus divini*, “a divine action of nature, an inherent power, resembling the other vital agencies of nature.”²

The second, with Dr. Michaëlis,³ and (at one time) Theodore de Mopsueste,⁴ in fully admitting the existence of a *Theopneustos*, will only acknowledge it *in a portion* of the sacred books. For instance, in the first and fourth of the four gospels, in some of the epistles, and in parts of Moses, Isaiah, and Daniel. These portions of the Scriptures are, according to them, from God; the remainder is the production of man.

Finally, the third, as M. Twesten in Germany, and several English theologians,⁵ extends, it is true,

¹ Schleiermacher, *du Christliche Glaube*. Band. 1, s. 115. ² De Wette: *Lehrbuch anmerk.* Twesten: *Vorlesungen über die Dogmatik*, tom. i. p. 424, etc.

³ Michaëlis, *Introd. to N. S.*

⁴ Vide chap. v. sect. ii. question xlv.

⁵ Drs. Pye Smith, Dick, and Wilson.

the notion of a *Theopneustia* to all parts of the Bible, *but not in equal degree to all*, (nicht gleichmässig.) According to their view, inspiration would indeed be universal, but it would be unequal, often imperfect, accompanied with harmless errors, and meted out according to the nature of the passages, in very different measure, of which they constitute themselves more or less the judges.

Several among them, especially in England, have gone so far as to specify four degrees of divine inspiration. An inspiration of *supervision*, as they term it, by virtue of which the sacred authors would have been preserved from any important error in every thing relating to faith and practice;—an inspiration of *elevation*, by which the Divine Spirit, in exalting the minds of men of God to the purest regions of truth, would have indirectly stamped the same characters of holiness and majesty upon their writings;—an inspiration of *direction*, under the most powerful influence of which, the sacred authors would have been directed of God, as to what they were to say, and upon what they were to be silent;—and, finally, an inspiration of *suggestion*, under which (say they) all the sentiments, and even the words would have been given by God, by a still more direct and energetic operation of his Spirit.

“*Theopneustia*,” says M. Twesten, “extends, indisputably, even to the words, but only when their choice, or use, is associated with the spirituality of the inner man; for, in respect hereto, he

adds, distinctions must be made between the Old and New Testament,—between the law and the gospel,—between history and prophecy,—between narrative and doctrine,—between the apostles and their apostolic coadjutors.”

All these distinctions are, in our view, chimerical; the Bible itself does not authorize them; the church, during the first eight centuries of the christian era, knew nothing of them; and we believe them to be erroneous, and fraught with evil.

Our design, in this treatise, as opposed to these three systems, is to prove the EXISTENCE, UNIVERSALITY, and PLENITUDE of *Theopneustia*.

Our first question, therefore, is,—whether the Scriptures are the offspring of a divine and miraculous inspiration? We affirm that they are. We have next to inquire, whether the parts of Scripture which are *theopneustic*, are so equally and entirely; or, in other words, whether God has provided in a certain, though mysterious, manner, that even the words of the sacred volume should be invariably what they ought to be, and that they contain nothing of error? Which, moreover, we assert to be the fact. And, finally, we have to inquire, whether what is thus inspired of God in the Scriptures, is a part or the whole of them? We affirm that *all* the sacred writings are so;—the historical as well as the prophetic books,—the Epistles as well as the Canticles,—the gospels of Mark and Luke, as well as those of Matthew and John,—the account of Paul’s shipwreck in the Adriatic, as well as the destruction of the old world

in the waters of the flood,—the scenes of Mamre, under the tents of Abraham, as well as those of the day of Christ in the everlasting habitations,—and the prophetic prayers in which the Messiah, a thousand years before the days of his first advent, exclaims in the Psalms, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? They pierced my hands and my feet,—they cast lots upon my vesture,—and look and stare upon me;” as well as the recital given by the evangelists of the scene itself.

In other words, our object is to establish, by the word of God—that the Scriptures are from God,—that they are in every part from God,—and that they are, as a whole, entirely from God.

It is, however, necessary at the outset to make ourselves understood. In maintaining that all Scripture is from God, we are far from intimating that man has no association whatever with it. We shall again refer to this point more fully, but it is necessary briefly to notice it here. All the words of Scripture are the words of man, as they are also those of God. In a certain sense, the Epistle to the Romans is wholly and entirely a letter from Paul; and in a sense still higher, the Epistle to the Romans is wholly and entirely a letter from God.

Pascal might have dictated one of his Provincial Letters to some mechanic of Clermont, and another to the abbess of Port Royal: would the former, on that account, be less *Pascaline* than all the others? Undoubtedly not. The illustrious Newton, when he wished to give his marvellous discoveries to the

world, might have got a child at Cambridge to write the fortieth, and some domestic of his college to write the forty-first proposition of his immortal *Principia*, whilst he might have dictated the other pages to Barrow and Halley. Should we, therefore, be less in possession of the discoveries of his genius, and of those mathematical combinations which have demonstrably ranged under one law the movements of the universe? Would the entire work be less the work of Newton? Certainly not. Perhaps, however, some man of leisure might take a further interest in ascertaining the emotions of these two eminent men, or the careless thoughts of the child, or the simple prejudices of the servant, whilst their several pens, equally docile, were tracing the Latin sentences dictated to them. We should have been told, that the minds of the last two, though employed in writing the work, were perhaps listlessly wandering about the gardens of the city or the precincts of the colleges; whilst the two professors we have named, entering with transported feelings into all the ideas of their friend, and upborne in his sublime flight, like eaglets by the parent bird, would soar with him to the heights of science, and, sustained by his powerful wing, range with rapture over the new and boundless expanse which had been opened to their view. We should then be, furthermore, told that among the sentences thus dictated, there might have been some, the sense of which, neither the child, nor even the professors, had been able to understand. How little important are their details,

would you reply ; I care not to lose my time on them, I will study the book. Its preface, its title, its theorems, easy or difficult, understood or not, its first and its last lines, are all by the same author, and this suffices. Whoever may have been the writers, to what varied extent and height their thoughts have stretched, their faithful and directed pens have equally recorded the sentiments of their master in the same work, and I can always therein study with an equal confidence, in the very words of his genius, the mathematical principles of the philosophy of Newton. The case is the same with *Theopneustia* : the Divine power in causing the Holy Scriptures to be written by inspired men, has almost uniformly put in operation their understandings, their wills, their recollections, and their individualities, (as we shall presently shew.) Such is *Theopneustia*. It is thus that God, willing to make known to his elect, in an everlasting record, the spiritual principles of Divine philosophy, has dictated its pages, during sixteen hundred years, to priests, kings, warriors, shepherds, publicans, fishermen, scribes, and tent-makers ; associating with it, in a mysterious manner, and according to his own wisdom, their affections and their faculties. Such is then the Book of God. Its first line and its last, with all the instruction (whether understood or not) which it contains, are by the same author ; and this ought to satisfy us. Whatever the sacred penmen may have been, their circumstances, their impressions, their comprehension of the book, and the

measure of their individuality brought into operation by this divine and mysterious power, they have all, with a faithful and directed hand, written in the same volume, under the guidance of the same Master, in whose estimation "a thousand years are as one day," and the result is—the Bible. I will not lose my time in vain questioning, I will study the book. It is the word of Moses, of Amos, of John, and of Paul; but it is the thought of God, and the word of God. "The Spirit of the Lord has spoken by me," say they, "and his word was on my tongue." "It is thou, Lord, who hast spoken by the mouth of David thy servant."¹

It would be, therefore, in our view, very erroneous language to say—certain passages in the Bible are those of man, and others those of God. Not so; every verse therein, without exception, is of man, and they are also all, without exception, those of God—whether they speak directly in his name, or whether He employs all the personality of the sacred writer: and as St. Bernard has said of the living works of regenerate man,—“Our will does nothing thereunto, without grace; but grace is inactive without our will;” and so it may be said in the matter of the Scriptures, that God has done nothing but by man, and man has done nothing but by God.

It is, in fact, with *Theopneustia* as with efficacious grace. In the operations of the Holy Spirit, when causing the writing of the Scriptures, and in those

¹ 2 Sam. xxiii. 1, 2; Acts iv. 25. See our chap. vi. sect. 2.

of the same Spirit converting a soul, and directing it in the path of sanctification, the man is, in different respects, entirely active and entirely passive. God does every thing ; and man does every thing ; and we may say, with regard to both these works, what St. Paul said to the Philippians of one of them :—" It is God which worketh in you *both to will and to do.*"¹ Thus we see, that in the Scriptures, the same operations are alternately attributed to God and to man. God converts, and it is man who is converted ; God circumcises the heart, God gives a new heart, and it is man who is called to circumcise and make to himself a new heart ; " not alone" (as is observed by the celebrated President Edwards, in his admirable remarks against the errors of the Arminians,) " because we ought to use the means to obtain this effect ; but because this effect itself is our act, as it is our duty :—*God producing all, and we acting all.*"²

Such is then the word of God. It is God speaking in man, God speaking by man, God speaking as man, and God speaking for man ! This we affirm ; and this we are bound to establish.

It may, however, be previously requisite to define this doctrine with more precision.

In theory, it would be permitted to say, that a religion may be divine, without the books which teach it being miraculously inspired. It would be possible, for instance, to imagine a Christianity without *Theopneustia* ; and we might perhaps con-

¹ Phil. ii. 13.

² Edwards's Remarks, &c. p. 251.

ceive that all the miracles of our faith were accomplished, with the single exception of that one. In this supposition, (which there is nothing to authorize,) the Eternal Father had given his Son to the world; the creating Word, made flesh, had suffered for us the death of the cross, and shed down from heaven upon the apostles the Spirit of wisdom, and power of working miracles; but all these mysteries of redemption once accomplished, he had left to these men of God the care of penning, according to their own wisdom, our sacred books, and their writings, consequently, would present to us only the natural language of their own extraordinary illumination, of their convictions and their love. Such an order of things is, however, merely a vain hypothesis, directly opposed to the testimony which the Scriptures give of what they really are; but without insisting here that it resolves nothing, and that one miracle for another (that of illumination) is not less inexplicable than is that of *Theopneustia*; and, further, without now insisting that the word of God possesses a divine power which belongs to it alone; such an order of things, if it had been realized, would have exposed us to innumerable errors, and plunged us into fearful incertitude. Without some safeguard against the rashness of the writers, we could not have awarded to their writings even the authority allowed in our own times in the church to the works of Augustine, of Bernard, of Luther, of Calvin, and of many others, whose mind the Spirit of God has enlightened. It is, in fact,

pretty well known, that many faulty words and erroneous propositions have crept into the most brilliant pages of these admirable doctors. And, moreover, the apostles would, (according to the assumed hypothesis) far more than they, have been liable to serious deviations, because they would not have had, like those doctors of the church, the word of God by which to correct their own; and because they would have had to compose for themselves all the language of religious science. But a science is more than half developed when its language is completed. What grievous errors, then, what sad ignorance, what inevitable contrariety, would necessarily enter into their revelation without *Theopneustia*; and to what deplorable doubts would the church have then been left a prey! Errors in the selection, value, and exposition of facts; in viewing their connexion with doctrines; and in the setting forth of these doctrines: errors of omission, of language, and exaggeration; errors in the adoption of the prejudices of a nation, state, or party; errors in foreseeing the future and in judging of the past.

But, God be praised! it is not thus with our sacred books. They contain no error; their entire contents are inspired of God. Those "holy men spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost"—"not in words taught by man's wisdom;" but in words taught by the Spirit of God. So that not one of those words ought to be neglected; we are bound to respect and to study every jot and tittle

of them; because Scripture is refined, like silver separated from its dross, by sevenfold purification. It is perfect.

These assertions, which are themselves the testimony of the word of God, include already our last definition of *Theopneustia*, and lead us finally to characterise it as—"that inexplicable power which the Divine Spirit, aforetime, exercised upon the authors of Holy Scripture, to guide them even to the words which they have employed, and to preserve them from all error, as well as from any omission."

The new definition, which may appear complex, is not so in reality; because the two features of which it is composed are equivalent; and to receive the one, is to accept the other.

We will propose them separately to our readers, and offer them the alternative. The one has more precision, the other more simplicity, inasmuch as it presents the doctrine in a form more divested of every question relative to the mode of inspiration, and to the personal experience of the sacred writers. To accept, unreservedly, the one or the other, is to render to the Scriptures the honour and faith which are their due.

We therefore propose to establish the doctrine of *Theopneustia* under one or other of the following forms :—

"The Scriptures are given, and guaranteed by God, even as regards their language;" and, "the Scriptures do not contain any error." By which we

understand that they communicate all that they ought to communicate; and that they communicate only what they ought to communicate.

Now, how will this doctrine be established?—It shall be by the Scriptures, and by the Scriptures alone.

Having once admitted the Scriptures to be true, it is for themselves to inform us what they are; and when once they have vouched for their own inspiration of God, it is for themselves to inform us how they are inspired, and to what extent.

To seek to prove *à priori* their inspiration, by arguing upon the necessity of this miracle for the security of our faith, would be to reason feebly, and almost to imitate, in one sense, the presumption which, in another sense, imagines *à priori* four degrees of *Theopneustia*. To attempt, moreover, to establish the entire inspiration of the Scriptures upon the consideration of their beauty, uniform wisdom, their prophetic foreknowledge, and all those characteristics of Divinity which their pages exhibit, would be to rest upon reasoning, doubtless just, but contestable, or at least contested. It is, therefore, solely on the declarations of holy Scripture that we are bound to stand. We have no other authority for the doctrines of our faith; and *Theopneustia* is one of those doctrines.

Nevertheless, let us here anticipate a misunderstanding. It might happen that some reader, unsettled about Christianity, mistaking our object and thinking to find in this treatise arguments

which will decide his mind, may find his expectations disappointed, and think himself justified in reproaching our argument as falsely reasoned, as if we were desirous of proving the inspiration of the Scriptures by the inspiration of the Scriptures. It is of consequence to undeceive any such. We have not penned these pages for the disciples of Porphyry, Voltaire, or Rousseau; and our object is not to prove that the Scriptures are worthy of faith. Others have done this; but it is not our object. We address ourselves to men who respect the Scriptures, and who admit their veracity. It is to these we affirm, that, being true, they testify their own inspiration; and that, being inspired, they declare their being entirely inspired: whence we conclude that it must indeed be so.

This doctrine is, certainly, of all truths, one of the most simple and evident, to those who are humble and rationally subject to the testimony of the Scriptures. We may, doubtless, have heard modern theologians represent this doctrine as full of incertitude and difficulties; but men who have sought to study it only by the light of God's word, have neither met with these difficulties, nor formed this incertitude. Nothing, on the contrary, is more clearly or more frequently taught in Scripture, than its own inspiration. And thus, men of olden time were entirely unacquainted with the doubts and difficulties entertained by the doctors of our age. With them the Bible was from God, or was not from God. Antiquity presents, on this point, an

admirable unanimity.¹ But since that moderns, in imitation of the Talmudist Jews and rabbins of the middle age,² have imagined learned distinctions between the four or five different degrees of inspiration, who can be astonished that incertitude and difficulties multiply before them? They contest what the Scriptures teach, and they explain what they do not teach. We can understand their perplexity; but the fault lies in their own temerity.

This testimony, which the Scriptures bear to their own inspiration, is even so evident, that one might be astonished to witness, among Christians, diversities of opinion on a subject so well defined. The evil, however, is but too well explained by the power of prejudices. The mind being already prepossessed with the objections which have been made, the sacred passages, as they consecutively present themselves, are perverted from their natural meaning, and, by a secret working of thought, they endeavour to reconcile them with the difficulties which perplex them. They deny, in despite of the Scriptures, their full inspiration, as the Sadducees deny the resurrection, because they found the miracle inexplicable; but we must remind them that Jesus answered, "Ye do err, because YE KNOW NOT THE SCRIPTURES, NEITHER THE POWER OF GOD,"

¹ See, on this subject, the learned dissertation, in which Dr. Rudelbach establishes, by history, sound doctrines on inspiration, in like manner as we have endeavoured to establish them by Scripture. (*Zeitschrift für die gesammte Lutherische Theologie und Kirche, von Rudelbach und Guericke, 1840.*) ² Vide our chap. v. sect. ii. quest. 44.

(Mark xii. 24, 27.) It is, therefore, on account of this too general disposition of the human mind, that we have judged it best not to set before the reader our scriptural proofs, until after we have carried him through a closer examination of the objections which are opposed to us ; and this will be the subject of the succeeding chapter.

We equally desire to present our readers with the most precise exposition of the doctrine which is the groundwork of this treatise, and of some of the various questions involved in it ; but we have judged it expedient to postpone this development likewise, to our closing pages, either because it will be better received, after certain difficulties have been maturely weighed, or because we would not repulse, at the outset, by a too didactic method, our unlettered readers, who may be seeking in these pages the edification of their faith.

We are, therefore, about to commence with an attentive examination of the difficulties and systems which are advanced against the doctrine of plenary inspiration. These difficulties consist of objections, and these systems are rather evasions. We will examine both in the two following chapters.

CHAPTER II.

THE EXAMINATION OF OBJECTIONS.

IT is objected, that the individuality of the sacred writers, which is in so marked a manner imprinted on their respective writings, cannot be reconciled with a plenary inspiration ;—it is objected, that the fallibility of the translator, renders illusory the infallibility of the original text ;—it is objected, that the use made by the apostles of the entirely human version of the Septuagint, renders their *Theopneustia* more than suspected ;—objections are raised on account of the variations in manuscripts, imperfections in reasoning and doctrine, and inaccuracies in facts ;—it is objected, that the sacred writers contradict natural laws now well known ;—and, finally, objections are raised against what have been termed the confessions of St. Paul. We will undertake to reply to each of these difficulties in succession ; and may afterwards analyze some of those theories by which they endeavour to set aside the doctrine of a plenary *Theopneustia*.

SECTION I.—*The individuality of the sacred authors deeply stamped upon the books which they have written.*

In the first place, it is stated, in objection, that this individuality, which is so abundantly evident throughout the sacred writings, presents itself in powerful testimony against the doctrine of a full and continuous inspiration. It is impossible (they tell us) to read the Scriptures without being struck with the differences of language, thought, and style, which their authors severally exhibit. This dissimilarity, constituting, as it does, an incontestable proof of their individuality, every where betrays the concurrence of their personal agency in the composition of the Scriptures. Even were not the title of each book to inform us that we had passed from one author to another, it would, nevertheless, be immediately perceived, by the change of their character, that we had no longer to do with the same writer, and that another person had taken up the pen. This diversity is manifest even between one prophet, or apostle, and another. Who can read the writings of Isaiah and Ezekiel, Amos and Hosea, of Zephaniah and Habakkuk, of Jeremiah and Daniel, and afterwards study those of Paul, Peter, or John, without remarking, in each of them, the influence which the writer's habits, condition, genius, education, recollections, and all his external and other circumstances, have exercised on his views of truth, and on his reasoning and language?

They relate what they have seen, and as they have seen it. Their memory is there in play ; their imagination finds scope ; their affections then expand ; all their whole being is there at work ; and their moral physiognomy is clearly pourtrayed. It is felt that the composition of each book has mainly depended, whether as regards its ground-work or form, upon the circumstances and peculiar cast of mind of its author. Could the son of Zebedee have composed the Epistle to the Romans, such as we have received it from the apostle Paul ? Who would think of attributing to him the Epistle to the Hebrews ? And if the Catholic Epistles of St. Peter were divested of their title, who would, for a moment, think of assigning them to St. John ? It is the same as respects the other evangelists. They are all four signally recognisable, although they speak of the same Master, profess the same doctrines, and contain a repetition of the same actions. Here is the fact ; it is incontestable ; and here (we are told) are the conclusions to be drawn from it :—

1. If it were God, who alone and unceasingly spoke in the Scriptures, we should see, in their various parts, an uniformity, which does not exist.

2. It must, therefore, be admitted, that two different powers have acted, at the same time, upon the sacred authors, whilst they composed the Scriptures :—the natural power of their individuality, and the miraculous power of inspiration.

3. From the conflict, or the concurrence, or the balanced action of these two powers, there must

have resulted a variable and gradual inspiration ; sometimes full, sometimes imperfect, and often even reduced to the feeble measure of a mere supervision.

4. The variable power of the Divine Spirit, in this united action, must have proportioned itself to the importance and difficulty of the matters treated of by the sacred author. It may even have abstained from interfering, where the judgment and memory of the writer could suffice, because God does not perform useless miracles.

“ It does not belong to man to say where nature ends and where inspiration begins,” observes Bishop Wilson.¹

“ What there is of exaggeration in the notions which some persons have conceived respecting inspiration,” says Dr. Twisten,² “ is not that they have not extended inspiration to all, but that they have not extended it to all equally. If inspiration does not exclude the personal action of the sacred authors, neither does it destroy all influence of human imperfection. But we can suppose this influence always more feeble in the writers, according as the matter treated of was more intimately connected with Christ.”

“ We must recognise those degrees of inspiration,” remarks Dr. Dick.³ “ In the first place, there are many things which the sacred authors might know

¹ Lectures on the Evidences of Christianity, p. 506. ² Vorles, über die Dogmatik, vol. i. ³ Essay on the Inspiration of the Holy Scripture.

by the sole powers of nature ; no supernatural influence was necessary to enable them to narrate these ; it only required that they should be infallibly preserved from error. In the second place, there were others, for which their understanding and faculties must have been divinely strengthened. Finally, there are yet many others, involving subjects for which a direct revelation from the Holy Ghost was indispensable to them."

5. Hence it follows, that even if this plenary inspiration were sometimes necessary, nevertheless, in matters alike familiar and without religious importance, there may be found in the Scriptures some innocent errors, and some traces of that infirmity which will ever mark the erring hand of man. While the energies of the Holy Spirit, which, by a constant and often constraining power, enlarged the understanding of the men of God, purified their affections, and enabled them to seek among all their recollections those which might be most usefully transmitted to the church of God, the natural powers of their minds being left free as to all details not connected either with faith or virtue, might have led to some mixture of inaccuracy or imperfection in the Scriptures. " We must not, then, attribute an unlimited infallibility to Scripture, as if it contained no error," observes Dr. Twisten. Without contradiction, God " is truth ; and, in things important, all that is of him is truth ; but if all is not equally important, then does not all equally proceed from him ; and if

inspiration does not exclude the personal action of the sacred authors, neither does it destroy all influence of human imperfection.”¹

Such is, then, the objection. Its hypotheses and conclusions import that there are, in the Scriptures, passages devoid of importance, and others infected with errors. We will presently repel, with all our power, the falseness of these two imputations; but this is not the place to do so. The matters immediately under our consideration are the living and personal form by which the Scriptures of God have come to us, and its pretended incompatibility with the fact of a plenary inspiration.

It is, therefore, to this objection that we have now to reply.

1. We begin by declaring that we are far from contesting the alleged fact, whilst we wholly reject the false conclusions which are derived from it. So far are we from being unmindful of these human features, throughout impressed upon the sacred writings, that, on the contrary, it is with profound gratitude, and ever-increasing admiration, that we regard this living, actual, dramatic, philanthropic character, which shines with so much power and beauty throughout the book of God. Yes (and we gladly, in this point, concur with objectors), in one place we have the phraseology, accent, and voice of a Moses, in another, of a St. John; here of an Isaiah, there of an Amos; here of a Daniel, and there of a Peter, Nehemiah, or Paul. We recog-

¹ Ut supra.

nise, we hear, we see them; it is impossible to be mistaken. This fact we admit, we delight to contemplate it, we admire it greatly; and we see in it (as we shall have occasion to reiterate) a proof of the divine wisdom which has indited the Scriptures.

2. Of what consequence, to the fact of Theopneustia, is the absence or the cooperation of the affections of the sacred writer? Cannot God either use or dispense with them? He who can give voice to a statue, can he not make a child of man speak according to his will? He who, by a dumb animal rebuked the madness of a prophet, could he not convey to another prophet the sentiments or words which he judged best adapted to the plan of his revelations? He who called forth from the wall an inanimate hand to record the terrible denunciation, MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN! could he not equally direct the intelligent and pious pen of his apostle to trace for him such words as these: "*I say the truth in Christ, my conscience bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart, for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh, who are Israelites?*" Do you know how God acts; and do you know how it is he forbears acting? Can you disclose to us the mechanism of inspiration? Can you trace wherein consists the difference of his action; where individuality is visible, and where it is not? Will you explain to us how the flow of ideas, recollections, and emotions of the sacred writers, would deprive them of any particle of their

Theopneustia ; and will you tell us why this should not itself be one of its elements ? Between the fact of individuality, and the conclusion which you would draw from it, there is an abyss, which your understanding can no more fathom in combating *Theopneustia*, than can ours in explaining it. Was there not much individuality in the wicked Caiaphas, when, abandoning himself to the suggestions of his evil heart, full of bitter wrath, and having no thought of uttering the words of God, he exclaimed, in the Jewish council : "Ye know nothing at all, nor consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people ?" (John xi. 49—51.) Surely we have abundant individuality in these words, and yet it is further written : "*This spake he not of himself*" (ἀφ' ἑαυτοῦ), but being high-priest that year, he unwittingly spoke as a prophet, proclaiming that Jesus should come "to gather together the children of God that were scattered abroad."

Why, then, should not the same Spirit employ the devout affections of his saints to proclaim the words of God, as well as make use of the hypocritical and wicked thoughts of his most bitter enemies ?

3. When it is said, respecting any passage, that being in the style of Moses, Luke, Ezekiel, or John, it cannot, therefore, be in that of God, you would thereby seem to indicate the accent of the Holy Ghost ; and teach us to recognise him by the cast of his sentences, and tone of voice : you would tell us whether his supreme individuality is to be found

in the Hebrew or the Greek language. Since you know this, acquaint us also with it.

4. It must not be forgotten, that in the varied actings of God's sovereignty the employment of second causes is not excluded. On the contrary, it is in their subjection that he delights to display his infinite wisdom. In the field of creation he gives us vegetation by the combined employment of the elements,—of heat, humidity, electricity, air, light; and by the mechanical attraction and multiplied agency of capillary vessels and organs. In the field of providence, he accomplishes the development of his vast designs by the unexpected concurrence of millions of human wills, alternately intelligent and submissive, or ignorant and rebellious. "Herod, Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, (all moved by various motives,) were gathered together," he tells us, "to do what his hand and his counsel determined before to be done." In the field of prophecy it is, also, in like manner, that he brings about the fulfilment of his predictions. For instance; long before the period of action, he prepares a warlike prince in the mountains of Persia, and another in the heights of Media: and having designated the former by name two hundred years previously, he unites them, at the time determined, with ten other nations, against the Chaldean empire; he enables them to surmount a thousand obstacles, and, finally, brings them into the mighty Babylon, just at the expiration of the seventy years which had so long been assigned as the term of the Jewish

captivity. Even in the field of miracles, he is, moreover, pleased to employ second causes. He might here limit himself to saying, "Let it be," and it would be; but his purpose is, even in the employment of inferior agents, to shew us that it is he alone who gives power to the weakest amongst them. To divide the Red Sea, he did not alone command Moses to lift up his rod and stretch out his hand over the waters; but he caused them to go back by a strong east wind, which blew all that night. To cure the man who was born blind, he makes clay and anoints his eyelids. In the field of redemption, instead of converting a soul by a simple act of his will, he presents him with motives; he inclines him to read the Gospel, and sends him the messengers of its glad tidings: and thus it is, that whilst it is he who "works in us to will and to do of his good pleasure," it is he who "of his own will begets us by the word of truth." And why should it not be thus too in the field of *Theopneustia*? Why, when he sends his word, should he not put it into the understandings, hearts, and lives of his servants, as well as upon their lips? Why should he not associate their personality with the truths they reveal to us? Why should not their sentiments, history, and experience, be a part of their *Theopneustia*?

5. That which will further demonstrate the error of the objection to which we are replying, is the extreme inconsequence of the use which is made of it. In fact, in order to deny the plenary inspiration

of certain portions of Scripture, objectors lay stress upon the individuality therein exhibited ; whilst they nevertheless admit that other portions of the sacred writings, which equally bear this same character, have been given directly by God, even in their minutest details ! Isaiah, Daniel, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the author of the Apocalypse, have all imprinted their peculiar style, features, manner, and character, on their prophecies, as manifestly as Luke, Mark, John, Paul, and Peter, can have done on their narratives or epistles. The objection, therefore, is not valid. If it prove any thing, it would prove too much.

6. What further strikes us in this objection, and in the intermitting system of inspiration with which it is associated, is, its three-fold character of complexity, rashness, and puerility. Of complexity, because it supposes that the Divine agency, in dictating the Scriptures, was interrupted or weakened, according to the difficulty of a passage, or as its importance became diminished ; and thus they make God alternately withdraw from, or advance in the mind of the sacred writer, in the course of a chapter, or even of a passage ! Of rashness, for unmindful of the majesty of the Scriptures, they have dared to suppose that their importance has demanded nought but the exercise of human wisdom, save in some of their parts. Of puerility, say we, finally, because they allege their fear of attributing useless miracles to God : as if the Holy Ghost, after having, as they admit, dictated word

by word one portion of the Scriptures, would find less trouble elsewhere by merely assisting the sacred penmen in the way of enlightenment, or by leaving them to write under his superintendence alone!

7. But far more is involved in this objection. That which especially arouses the mind against a theory which daringly classes the Scriptures as *inspired*, *demi-inspired*, and *non-inspired*, (as if this evil doctrine necessarily resulted from the individuality with which they are stamped,) is its direct opposition to the Scriptures themselves. One portion of the Bible is by man, they profanely affirm, and another is from God. Nevertheless, hear the Bible itself: "ALL SCRIPTURE IS GIVEN BY INSPIRATION OF GOD." Here is no exception. By what authority, then, does any one dare to make exceptions, when the Bible itself makes none? Again, we are told that there are in the Scriptures a certain number of passages which could only have been penned under plenary inspiration; there are others for which it would have sufficed that their authors had received eminent gifts; and others, again, which a man of very ordinary mind might have composed. This may be, but of what importance is the question? When you are informed of an author's name, you know that the entire book is his composition, the easy and the difficult portions, the important and unimportant matter of it. If "ALL Scripture" is "by inspiration of God," of what consequence, we repeat, is the question, that there are passages which, in your eyes, are more difficult

or more important than others? The least of the disciples of Jesus might, doubtless, have given to us the fifth verse of the 11th chapter of John's gospel: "Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus," as the humblest schoolmaster might have composed the first line of Athalia: "Yes, I come into his temple the Eternal to adore." But if we were told that the eminent Racine had caused his whole drama to be written, from his dictation, by some village pedagogue, should we the less continue to attribute to him all the parts thereof, the verses, the division of the scenes, the names of the characters, the indication of their entrances and exits, as well as the most sublime apostrophes of his chorus? If then God himself declares to us his having dictated the entire Scriptures, who will venture to say that this fifth verse of the 11th chapter of St. John is less from God than is the sublime language in which that Gospel begins, and which describes to us the Eternal Word? Inspiration may, doubtless, be *recognised* in certain passages more clearly than in others, but it is not, on this account, less real in these latter than in the former.

In a word, if there were parts of the Bible without inspiration, it would no longer be the truth to say that the whole Bible is divinely inspired. It would no longer be entirely the word of God. It would have deceived us.

8. It is especially important to remark here, that this fatal system of a graduated, imperfect, intermitting inspiration, is the offspring of that irreverent

disregard which we have already more than once had occasion to notice. It is because objectors would almost always look for inspiration in the man, whilst it is in the book only that they should look for it. It is "ALL SCRIPTURE," it is *all that is WRITTEN*, which is inspired of God. We are not told, and it is not asked of us, how God has done it. It is solely attested to us that he has done it. This simply is what we are bound to believe, without reference to the means he has taken to accomplish it.

From this false point of view in which objectors choose to place themselves, for the consideration of the fact of inspiration, there result the three following delusions :—

In the first place, in contemplating inspiration in the sacred author, they are naturally inclined to picture it to themselves as an *extraordinary excitement in him*, of which he is himself conscious, which sets him above himself, and which animates him, like the Pythian priestess, with an *afflatu divino*—a poetic fire, easily recognised ; so that when his words become simple, calm, and familiar, a difficulty is felt in attributing to him divine influence.

Again.—By viewing *Theopneustia* in the person, they have very naturally been led to impute to him *different degrees* of perfection, because they know that the sacred writers themselves received very various measures of illumination, and differed in personal holiness. But if we see inspiration in the book, instead of looking for it in the man, then only

shall we recognise that it cannot be susceptible of degrees. A word is from God, or it is not from God. If it be from God, it cannot be so in two ways. Whatever may have been the spiritual condition of the writer, if all his writings be divinely inspired, all his words are from God. Thus it is, (and it must be especially remarked,) that a Christian would no more hesitate, than did the Saviour, to associate the writings of Solomon with those of Moses, and the gospel of Mark or Matthew, with that of the disciple whom Jesus loved, or with the very words of the Son of God; "they are all alike from God."

Finally.—From considering inspiration in the writers instead of seeing it in the Scriptures; they have, moreover, by a third delusion, been naturally led to judge it absurd to suppose that God should *miraculously reveal* to a man *that which the man already knew*. On this account, they think themselves justified in denying the inspiration of those passages in which the sacred writers only relate what they have seen, and of those sentences which any man of sound mind might convey without inspiration. But it would be altogether otherwise with them, the moment they see inspiration *in that which is written*; for then they would know that every line was dictated by God, whether it related to things which the writer already knew, or to those of which he was ignorant. Who, for instance, does not know, that were I to *dictate* to a pupil a treatise on geometry, it would be very different from my

having first, more or less, *instructed* him in the science, and then left him to write the book under my supervision? in the latter case, doubtless, he would only need my assistance in difficult propositions; but who, then, would think of saying that the book was mine? In the former case, on the contrary, every part of the book, whether easy or difficult, from the quadrature of transcendental curves to the simple theory of a right line or triangle, would be mine. Well! such is the Bible. It is not, as you venture to say, a book which God has charged men, previously enlightened, to write under his superintendence: it is a book which God has dictated to them; it is the word of God; the Spirit of the Lord spake to its authors, and his words have proceeded from them.

9. That the style of Moses, Ezekiel, David, St. Luke, and St. John, may, at the same time, also be the style of God, is what a *child* could tell us.

If a modern French author, at the commencement of the present century, had judged it expedient, in order to render himself popular among his countrymen, to adopt, for a time, the style of Chateaubriand, might it not have been said, with equal truth, though in two different senses, that this adopted style was his, whilst, nevertheless, it was truly that of Chateaubriand? If God himself, willing to save the French nation from a desolating outbreak by the promulgation of the Gospel, vouchsafed to send thither some prophet by whose mouth it should be proclaimed, it would doubtless be necessary that

they should preach in French. But, in this case, what evidence would you require to enable you to discover in their preaching the style of God? He might will that one of these prophets should speak like Fenelon, and the other like Bonaparte. In a certain sense, it would be truly the sententious and abrupt speech of the great general; and, in the same sense, it would be equally true that we should have the undulating phraseology, and the sustained and measured periods of the dignitary of Cambray; but in a higher and truer sense, it would be, in both, the style, the periods, the method and word of God. God might, undoubtedly, at any period of his revelation have caused his voice to be heard from heaven in thunderings, as at Mount Sinai, or as on the banks of the Jordan. He might, had it so pleased him, have commissioned angels of light only, to make known his will; but, had this been so, in what languages would they have spoken? Surely in those of earth. If then the Almighty, instead of the syntax of the skies and the vocabulary of archangels, has been pleased to use the language of the Greeks and Hebrews, why might he not equally make method, style, and personality subserve his purpose?

10. He has indubitably done this; but not at random. "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world." (Acts xv. 18.) Just as he each year unfolds the foliage of a tree for the time, when, breathing the elements of air, and availing itself of the labour of the roots, it shall be

able without danger to imbibe their sap ; as also for the time when the caterpillar shall appear and spin its silk among its branches ;—just as he first prepared a gourd for the spot, and for the night in which Jonah should seat himself over against Nineveh, and then a fatal worm for the dawn of the morrow, when this gourd was to wither away ;—just so, also, when he would proceed to the more important of his works ; when he would indite the Scripture, which must survive the heavens and the earth ; the eternal God had in wisdom prepared, long in advance, each one of his prophets, for the moment and for the testimony to which he had from all eternity appointed them. He has chosen them, one after the other, for their respective offices, from among all the sons of men, and in them he has accomplished fully this word, “ Send, O Lord, by the hand of him whom thou wilt send.” As a skilful musician called upon to execute some master-piece alone, puts his lips by turns to the mournful flute, the shepherd’s reed, the mirthful pipe, and the war trumpet ; so the Almighty God, to sound in our ears his eternal word, has selected from of old the instruments best suited to receive successively the breath of his Spirit. “ He chose them before the foundation of the world, and prepared them from the womb.”¹

Have you ever entered the cathedral at Fribourg, and listened to its incomparable organist, who, while he runs over the harmonious keys, pro-

¹ Gal. i. 15. Eph. i. 4.

ducing by turns the stirring music of the soldier's march, the piteous cry for help in danger, or the song of praise when the tempest is over, melts to tears the ravished listener? Your whole nature still trembles under the overpowering sight and sounds!—Just so the eternal God, mighty in harmony of purpose, has successively laid the finger of his Spirit upon the keys chosen by him for the hour of his purpose, and to complete the concord of his heavenly anthem. He had before him, from all eternity, the whole series of human keys; his creative eye compassed, with one look, the gamut-link of sixty centuries, and when he was pleased to proclaim to a fallen world the eternal purpose of redemption, and the advent of the Son of Man, he set his left hand upon Enoch, and his right upon the humble yet sublime prisoner of Patmos. Seven hundred years before the deluge, the heavenly anthem began with these words:—"Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all:"—already, however, in the mind of God and in the eternal harmony of his work, the voice of John responded to that of Enoch, and three thousand years after him finished the hymn in these words:—"Behold he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him.—Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus." And during this hymn of thirty centuries, the Spirit of God has never ceased to breathe in all his messengers. Angels, we are told, by an apostle, bow down to contemplate the depths

of these things,¹ while the elect of God were awakened, and became depositories of eternal life.

Between Enoch and St. John, hear Jeremiah twenty-four centuries after the one, and seven hundred years before the other:—"Before I formed thee in the belly," says the Eternal, "I knew thee, and before thou camest forth out of the womb, I sanctified thee, and ordained thee a prophet unto the nations;"² and in vain did he in amazement exclaim:—"Ah, Lord God! behold, I cannot speak, for I am a child." The Eternal answers him:—"Say not, I am a child; for whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak." Then the Lord put forth his hand and touched his mouth, and said, "Behold, I have put words in thy mouth."³

Between Enoch and Jeremiah, hear Moses, who, on the mountain of Horeb, thus pleads against the call of the Lord:—"O my Lord! I am not eloquent,—but am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue;—send, I pray thee, by the hand of him whom thou wilt send." But the anger of the Lord kindles against Moses, and he sends him forth, saying:—"I will be with thy mouth, and will teach thee what thou shalt say."⁴

Between Jeremiah and St. John, hear Saul of Tarsus: "When it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen."⁵ Thus we have, alter-

¹ 1 Pet. i. 12. ² Jer. i. 5—7. ³ Ibid. ⁴ Exod. iv. 10, &c. &c.

⁵ Gal. i. 15, 16.

nately, the uncultivated and sublime simplicity of John; the affecting, elliptical, soul-stirring and argumentative energy of Paul; the fervour and solemnity of Peter; the poetic grandeur of Isaiah; the lyre of David; the ingenuous and majestic narratives of Moses, or the sententious and royal wisdom of Solomon. Yes, it was all this; it was Peter, Isaiah, Matthew, John, or Moses; but it was God.

“Behold! are not all these which speak Galileans?” was the cry on the day of Pentecost. Yes, they are; but the word which proceeds from their lips comes from another country—it is that of heaven. Hear it! for tongues of fire have descended upon their heads, and it is God, by their mouth, who speaks to us.

11. Finally—we desire it should be understood, that so far from the human individuality, which is so evident throughout the Scriptures, leaving any stain, or being any mark of infirmity, it, on the contrary, stamps them with divine beauty, and powerfully displays to us their *Theopneustia*.

We have asserted that it is God who speaks to us; but, cast in earthly mould, it is also man: it is man; but it is also God. Oh! admirable word of my God! cast, so to speak, in human mould, like the eternal Word. Yes,—God has sent it down to us, full of grace and truth; similar to human words in every respect, error and sin excepted. Admirable and divine Word!—but replete with huma-

nity,—gracious Word of my God! Yes, in order that we might understand it, mortal lips must be employed to tell of human things; and to win us, the characteristics of our thought, and all the expression of our emotions must be clothed upon, because God knoweth our frame. But recognise it to be the word of the Lord, “quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword,” and the most simple among us, understanding it, can say, like Cleopas and his companion:—“Have we not felt our hearts burn within us, while it has spoken to us?”

How greatly does this abounding humanity, and all this personality with which the divinity of the Scriptures is invested, charm us; reminding us that the Saviour of our souls, whose touching voice they are, himself bears a human heart on the throne of God, although seated on high, where angels serve and for ever adore him! It is thus, also, that they present to us not only that double character of variety and unity, which has ever adorned all the other works of God, as Creator of heaven and earth; but, moreover, that intermingling of familiarity with authority; of sympathy with greatness; of practical details with mysterious majesty; and of humanity with divinity, which are manifested in all the dispensations of the same God, as the Redeemer and Shepherd of his church.

In like manner the Father of mercies, when speaking in his prophets, was pleased not only to employ their manner as well as their voice; their style as well as their pen; but also often to bring

into use their faculties of judging and feeling. At one time, to exhibit to us his Divine sympathy, he has seen fit to combine their own recollections, their human convictions, their personal experience and devout emotions, in the words which he dictated to them ; and at another, for the purpose of manifesting to us his sovereign intervention, he has preferred to dispense with this *unessential* association of their memory, affections, and intelligence.

Such ought to be the word of God—like Emmanuel—full of grace and truth ; at once in the bosom of God and in the heart of man ; powerful and sympathising ; celestial and human ; exalted, yet humble ; imposing and familiar ; God and man ! This bears no resemblance to the God of rationalists. After having, like the disciples of Epicurus, banished the Divinity far from man, even to the third heaven, their desire is that the Bible also were removed thither. “Philosophy,” observes the too celebrated Strauss, of Ludwigsburg, “employs the language of God, whilst religion uses that of men.” Yes, without doubt, she does ; nor does she assume the use of any other : she leaves to the philosophers and gods of this generation both their empyrean and their language.

Studied under this aspect, and considered in this character, the word of God has no equal ; it offers to man of every age, place, and condition, surpassing and unfading attractions, which ever satisfy and never satiate. In contrast with human productions, it interests, and develops its momentous import in

proportion as it is assiduously read. The more it is examined and re-examined, the more its greatness and sublimity unfold themselves, as if fresh leaves were daily added by some invisible and gracious hand! And hence it is, that both cultivated and simple minds which have long fed upon the word, continue to *hang upon it*, as did others upon the lips of Jesus.¹ They find its whole contents incomparable: at one time mighty as the sound of many waters; at another, sweet and gentle as the voice of a wife to her husband; but always "perfect, converting the soul," and "making wise the simple."²

To what book, in this respect, could you compare it? Place by its side the productions of Plato, Seneca, Aristotle, St. Simon, or Jean Jacques Rousseau. Have you read those of Mahomet?—Listen to him but for an hour, and, under the burden of his shrill monotonous tone, your ears would tingle. From the first word to the last, it is the unvarying note of the same trumpet, it is ever the cornet of Medina, sounding from the top of some minaret, mosque, or caparisoned camel; always the Sibylline oracles, piercing and merciless, in one continued tone of threatening and command—whether prescribing virtue, or dooming to death—always the same rude forbidding voice, without feeling, familiarity, tears, soul, or sympathy.

Having read other books, if you feel the need of spiritual aliment, open the Bible, and hear it.

¹ Luke xix. 48, 'Ο λαὸς ἅπας ἐξεκρέματο. ² Psalm xix. 7.

Sometimes it is melodious with the songs of angels; but it is of angels visiting the children of Adam: at others, it pours forth the full tide of heaven's harmony, to cheer the heart of man, and to awaken conscience, in the shepherd's cot, as in the palace, in the garrets of poverty, as in the tents of the desert. The Bible, in fact, instructs all conditions of men: it unmask alike the humble and the great; revealing equally to both the love of God, and unveiling the same miseries. It addresses itself to children; and it is often children who there show us the way to heaven and the majesty of the Lord. It addresses itself to shepherds; and it is often shepherds who are there presented to us, to reveal the character of God. It speaks to kings and scribes; and it is often they who therein teach us the misery of man, humility, confession, and prayer. Domestic scenes, compunctions of conscience, secret effusions of prayer, travels, proverbs, outpourings of heart, the holy walk of a child of God, unveiled weaknesses, falls, restorations, inward experiences, parables, familiar epistles, theological expositions, sacred commentaries on some ancient Scripture, national chronicles, military annals, political developments, descriptions of God, portraits of angels, heavenly visions, practical exhortations, rules of life, solutions of mental difficulties, judgments of the Lord, sacred songs, predictions of the future, accounts anterior to creation, sublime odes, and inimitable poetic imagery—all these, by turns, present themselves to our view, in full and grateful

variety, and, as a whole, captivate us like the majesty of a temple. It is thus that the Bible, from its first page to the last, was intended to associate with its sublime unity the undefinable and attractive features of a human-like, familiar, sympathetic, personal instruction, and the interest of a drama of forty centuries. As has been said in the Bible of Desmarets, "There are shallows for lambs, and deep waters in which elephants may swim."

But see, at the same time, what unity and what innumerable and harmonious combinations appear in this immense variety! Under manifold forms we have always the same truth presented to us; always man lost, and God in the character of a Saviour; always the first Adam driven from Eden, and losing the tree of life, and the second Adam, with his ransomed ones, re-entering Paradise, and finding again the tree of life; always the same cry in ten thousand tones—"O heart of man, return to thy God, for thy God pardons! Thou art in the gulf; escape from it, for a Saviour is come down. He giveth holiness and life."

"Can it be that a book, at once so simple and so sublime, is the work of men?" was a question put by a celebrated philosopher of the last century to his fellows. To this all its pages have answered, No! for, throughout so many centuries, whichever of the sacred writers held the pen—king or shepherd, scribe or fisherman, priest or publican—everywhere we recognise the same author; and, though a thousand years intervene, it is

plainly the same Eternal Spirit which has conceived and dictated the whole. Everywhere—at Babylon as at Horeb, at Jerusalem as at Athens, and at Rome as at Patmos—we find the same God described, the same world, the same men, the same angels, the same future, and the same heaven. Everywhere, whether it be a poet or an historian who addresses us,—whether in the plains of the desert in the age of Pharaoh, or in the dungeons of the Capitol in the days of the Cæsars,—throughout the world, ruin ; in man, condemnation and helplessness ; in angels, sublimity, innocence, and love ; in heaven, purity and happiness, the meeting of truth and goodness, and the embracings of justice and peace ; the counsels of a God who pardoneth iniquity, transgression, and sin, and who, nevertheless, will not clear the guilty.

We therefore conclude that the plentiful traces of humanity which are found in the Scriptures, far from compromising their *Theopneustia*, are but indications of their Divinity.

SECTION II.—*The Translations.*

The following is the second objection :—You assure us, (it is sometimes said,) that the inspiration of the Scriptures extends even to the words of the original text ; but of what avail is this verbal exactitude of the sacred word, since, after all, the great majority of Christians can only use Versions more or less inaccurate ? The privilege of such an

inspiration is lost to the modern church, for you cannot go so far as to say that any translation is inspired.

We felt, at first, some repugnance to set forth this difficulty on account of its insignificance ; but it seems necessary to do so, because we are assured that it has been brought forward lately, and has obtained some credit.

The first remark we make upon this objection is, that *it is not one*. It does not contest *the fact* of the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures, but only the advantages of it. To the majority of readers, we are told, the benefit of such an intervention of God would be lost, because instead of the infallible words of the original, they can never have other than the fallible words of a translation. But you are not justified in denying a fact because all its value is not at once appreciated, nor in rejecting a doctrine, for the sole reason that the utility of it has not been recognised. All the expressions, for instance, and all the letters of the *Ten Commandments*, were certainly written by the finger of God, from *Aleph*, which is the first, to the *Caph*, with which they close ; but will any one venture to assert, that the credibility of this miraculous fact is weakened through the necessity under which the majority of unlearned persons find themselves, in the present day, of reading the Decalogue through the medium of a translation ? No one would venture to assert this. It must therefore be remembered, that this objection does

not directly attack the doctrine we are defending, but only calls in question its advantages ; these, it is argued, are lost to us in the work of translation—they vanish in this literary transformation.

We shall proceed to show how entirely this very assertion, when reduced to these last terms, is without foundation.

The divine word, which the Bible reveals to us, passes through four successive forms ere it reaches us in any translation. In the first place, it was from all eternity in the mind of God ; secondly, it was communicated by him to that of man ; thirdly, under the operation of the Holy Ghost, and by a mysterious transference, it has passed from the mind of the prophet into the characters and symbols of an articulate language, and its words take form and meaning ; fourthly, when it has undergone this first translation, as important as it is inexplicable, men have reproduced and recopied it in a new translation, from one human language into another. Of these four operations, the first three are divine ; the fourth alone is human and fallible. Are we to be told that, because this last is human, the divinity of the other three ought to be matter of indifference to us ? Let it be remarked, however, that between the third and fourth, that is, between the first transfer of the thought by the sensible signs of a human language, and the second translation of the words by other words, the difference is immense. Between the doubts we may entertain with regard to the correctness of versions, and those by which

we may be exercised as to the accuracy of the original text, (if it were not inspired even in its language,) the distance is infinite.

Such reasoning would amount to this:—What is it to me that the third operation is that of the Spirit of God, if the last is only accomplished by the mind of man? In other terms, what avails it that the primitive language is inspired, if the versions are not? But, in speaking thus, objectors forget that we are infinitely more assured of the accuracy of the translations than we could be of that of the original text, supposing all its expressions had not been given by God.

The five following considerations will, however, meet this question:—

1. The operation by which the sacred writers express in words the mind of the Holy Ghost, is itself, we have observed, a version, not of words by other words, but of Divine thoughts by sensible symbols. Now, this first translation is infinitely more undefined, more mysterious, and more exposed to error (if God's hand were not in it) than could be afterwards that by which we would render a Greek word of the original text by a vernacular equivalent. In order that a man may exactly express the mind of God, it is requisite, if his language be not dictated from on high, that he should entirely apprehend it in its full measure and in all the extent and depth of its meaning. But it is not thus with a simple version. The Divine mind being, as it were, already incarnate in the language of the sacred text, the

question is no longer, when we would translate it, about giving it a form, but merely of changing its garb—to make it speak in French or English what it speaks in Greek, and modestly to replace each of its words by an equivalent term. This is an operation, comparatively, very inferior, very material, without mystery, and infinitely less subject to error than the preceding. It even requires so little spirituality, that it might be *perfectly* done by an honest-minded heathen, provided he were *perfectly* acquainted with both languages. The version of an educated rationalist, who confined himself to the simple labour of translation, would afford us more security than that of an orthodox believer who allowed himself to paraphrase, who attempted to complete the sense of the text, and who endeavoured to present truth more clearly in his own language than it was found in the Greek or Hebrew original. And let not this assertion excite surprise; it is justified by fact. At the present day, in Germany, is not the translation by De Wette esteemed above that of the great Luther? Is it not felt that there is more likelihood of possessing the thought of the Holy Spirit in the lines of the Professor of Basle than in those of the Reformer, because the former has adhered closely to the expressions of his text, as a scholar subject to the laws of philology, while the other has seemed to seek after something more, and has written rather as an interpreter than as a translator? The more, then, we reflect upon this first consideration, the greater must appear the

difference between these two operations—I mean, the transference of the Divine thoughts into the words of human language, and the translation of these same words into the equivalent terms of another language.

2. A second character, by which we may perceive how much these two operations must necessarily differ, and which presents the work of our versions as infinitely less open to the chances of error than the original text (when supposed *uninspired*), is, that whilst our translations are the labour of a great number of men of every tongue and nation, who could devote to it their time and attention, who controlled each other from century to century, and who instructed and perfected each other;—the original text, on the contrary, had to be written *at a given* moment, and by one man alone. No one was with this solitary individual but his God only, to correct him if he misapprehended aught, and to supply him with right expressions, if he should use imperfect ones. If, therefore, God has not done it, no one could have done it. And if this man erred in giving the mind of the Holy Ghost, he had not, like our translators, friends to point out his errors, predecessors to guide him, successors to compare and rectify his mistakes; nor months, years, and centuries, to review and consummate his work. It is done by one man, and once for all. It may hence be seen how much more necessary was the intervention of the Holy Spirit to the sacred authors, than to their translators.

3. A third consideration which leads us to the same conclusion, is, that whilst all the translators of the Scriptures were learned and pains-taking men, well versed in the study of languages, the sacred authors were, for the most part, ignorant men, without literary culture, not accustomed to write their own language, and, on this account, exposed (if they *fallibly* set forth the Divine revelation), to give us an erroneous representation of an infallible mind.

4. A fourth, and weighty consideration, which still more signally evidences the immense difference that exists between the sacred writers and their translators, is, that whilst the thoughts of God passed with the rapidity of lightning through the mind of the prophet; whilst these thoughts could be found nowhere throughout the earth, except in the rapid expression which was then given to them by the sacred writer; whilst that, if he has imperfectly recorded them, you know not where to find his prototype, from which to recover, in their purity, the thoughts of God; and, finally, whilst that, if he is mistaken, his faults are for ever irreparable, and must endure when heaven and earth have passed away, and the Eternal Book is irremediably tainted, not a being in the world being able to restore it;—it is altogether otherwise with the translations:—These, on the contrary, can always be compared and confronted with the divine text, to be corrected and recorrected by this eternal model, until they become its perfect counterpart. The

inspired word never leaves us; we have not to ascend for it to the third heaven; it is still on the earth, pure as God himself originally vouchsafed it. We can, therefore, study it throughout time, for the purpose of subjecting the human work of our translations to its immutable truth. We can now, after a lapse of one hundred and thirty years, correct the versions of Ostervald and Martin, by applying to them more closely their infallible rule; after three hundred and seventeen years, we can test the work of Luther; and after fourteen hundred and forty, that of St. Jerome. The phraseology of God continues ever before our human versions, the same as God himself dictated it, in Hebrew or in Greek, at the day of its revelation; and with our lexicons in hand, we can return to, and re-examine, from century to century, the infallible expression which he has deigned to give of his Divine mind, until we are assured that modern versions have received the impress of their original, and that we have obtained, for our use, the most faithful *fac-simile*. Say no longer then, What does it avail that one is divine and the other human? If you desired to possess a bust of Napoleon, would you say to the sculptor, "Of what advantage to me is it that your model has been moulded at St. Helena, on the face of Bonaparte, since, after all, your copy cannot have been so moulded?"

5. Finally. What further characterises the first expression given to the mind of God, in the word of

the sacred book, from its new expression in any of our translations, is, that if you suppose the words of the one as little inspired as those of the other, the field of conjectures which you open to their possible faults would, as respects the original text, go on increasing to an illimitable extent; whilst the same field, as respects translated versions, would be comparatively circumscribed, and would, moreover, continually diminish in proportion as it is dwelt upon.

If some friend, returning from the East Indies, where your father, far from you, had breathed his last, were the bearer of a letter written with his own hand, or dictated by him, word after word, in the Bengalee dialect, would you feel indifferent whether this letter was entirely from him, because, being ignorant of the Bengal idiom, you could only read it through the medium of a translation? Do you not know that you might get translated versions of it multiplied, until you could have no more doubt as to the import of the original, than you would have if you were a Hindoo? Would you not admit that, after successively receiving these translations, your incertitude would go on diminishing, until it would no longer be appreciable, like those fractional and convergent progressions in arithmetic, whose last terms are equivalent to a cipher? Whilst, on the other hand, if the letter was not from your father himself, but from some stranger, who only said he had collected his sentiments, there would be no bounds to your possible suppo-

sitions ; and your incertitude would go on expanding in new and limitless directions, like those ascending progressions whose final terms represent infinity. It is thus with regard to the Bible. If I believe that God has dictated the entire book, my incertitude, as to its versions, would be limited to a very narrow compass, the boundary of which would be in a continual course of restriction, in proportion as translations were multiplied. But if I must think, on the contrary, that God has not entirely dictated, and that human infirmity has affected the original text, where will my suppositions of error stop ? I know not. The apostles were ignorant, I should say ; they were illiterate ; they were Jews ; they had popular prejudices ; they Judaized, they Platonized, &c. &c. I know not where to stop : I should begin like Locke, and end like Strauss. In the first place, I should deny the personality of Satan, as a rabbinical notion ; and I should close by denying that of Jesus Christ as a similar misconception. Between these two conclusions, in consequence of the ignorance to which the apostles might have been subject, I should proceed, like many others, in spite of the letter of the Bible, and with the Bible in my hand, to admit that there is no corruption in man, no personality in the Holy Ghost, no divinity in Jesus Christ, no expiation in his blood, no resurrection of the dead, no eternity of future punishments, no wrath in God, no devil, no miracles, none damned, and no hell ! St. Paul was orthodox, I should say with others, but he imperfectly understood his

Master. Whilst, on the contrary, if the entire original has been dictated by God, even to the most simple expressions, "even to the least iota and particle of a letter," who is the translator that can bring me, by his work, to any of these negations, or expel from my Bible the least of its truths?

Who does not, therefore, now feel to what an immeasurable distance all these considerations separate these two texts (that of the Bible and that of its versions), with regard to the importance of verbal inspiration? Between the transference of the mind of God into human words, and the simple turning of these words into other words, there is a distance equal to that of heaven from earth. The one required God; whilst for the other, man sufficed. Let us, therefore, no more hear the question—Of what advantage to us is the verbal inspiration of the one, if we have not this inspiration in the other? For between these two terms, which it is sought to equalize, there is almost infinity.

SECTION III.—*The Use of the Septuagint Version.*

It is insisted as follows:—We admit that the fact of modern translations can, in no degree, affect the first inspiration of the Scriptures; but there is far more than this to be considered. The sacred authors of the New Testament, when they themselves quote in Greek the Old Testament Hebrew Scriptures, make use of the *Greek translation* called the Septuagint, executed at Alexandria, two cen-

turies and a half before Jesus Christ. No one among moderns will now contend, (as was done in times past), that the Alexandrine interpreters were inspired. Would any one still venture to affirm that this version, human even in the time of Jesus Christ, has, by the mere fact of apostolical quotations, acquired a divine character, which did not previously belong to it? Would not this strange pretension resemble that of the Council of Trent, declaring the books of the Apocrypha to be divine, which the ancient church rejected from the canon, and which St. Jerome calls "*fables*, and a mixture of gold and smoke?"¹ or declaring authentic St. Jerome's *Latin* version, which was held by himself, and afterwards by the church, during upwards of a thousand years, as a human work only, respectable no doubt, but imperfect? Would it not, moreover, resemble the absurd infallibility of Sixtus V., who declared his edition of 1590 to be authentic;—or that of Clement VIII., his successor, who, finding the edition of Sixtus V. intolerably incorrect, suppressed it in 1592, and substituted a very different, still however an *authentic* edition?²

We are gratified in touching here upon this diffi-

¹ "Caveat omnia apocrypha Sciat multa his admixta vitiosa, et grandis esse prudentiæ aurum in luto quærere." See Epist. ad Lætam.—Prolog. Galeat. sive Præfat. ad Lib. Regum.—Symbol. Ruffini, tom. ix. p. 186.—See Lardner, vol. v. pp. 18—22. ² See Kortholt, De variis S. Scripturæ editionibus, pp. 110—251. Thomas James, Bellum Papale, sive Concordia Sixti V. Lond. 1600. Hamilton's Introduction to the Reading of the Hebrew Scriptures, pp. 163—166.

culty ; because, like many others, a close examination changes objections into arguments.

An inquiry into the manner in which the apostles employed the Septuagint, alone suffices to discover a striking indication of the verbal inspiration under which they wrote.

If a modern prophet were sent from God to the churches of our land, how, think you, would he proceed in quoting the Scriptures ? Undoubtedly he would quote them in our language ; but from what version ? Those of Ostervald and Martin being the versions in most extensive circulation, it is probable that his quotations would be in the words of the one or of the other, whenever their translations appeared to him sufficiently exact. Still, notwithstanding our customs and his own, as often as the sense of the original did not appear to him to be conveyed with sufficient fidelity, he would be especially careful to discountenance both these versions, and to supply his own translation. Sometimes, perhaps, he would even do more. The better to convey to us the exact sense in which he desired to apply such or such passages of Scripture, he might paraphrase the quoted passage, and neither follow the letter of the original text, nor that of the translations.

This is precisely what the sacred writers of the New Testament have done with regard to the Septuagint.

Although the universal custom of the Greek Jews, throughout the East, was to read in the synagogues,

and to cite in their discussions, the Old Testament from this ancient version;¹ the apostles, by the three different ways in which they make their quotations, show us the independence of the spirit which guided them.

In the first place, when the Alexandrian translators appeared to them accurate, they did not hesitate to adopt what was familiar to the ears of their Greek auditors, and to quote literally the Septuagint version.

Secondly, and this mode is very frequent, when they are not satisfied with the rendering of the Septuagint, they correct it, and make their quotations from the original Hebrew, which they re-translate more exactly.

Thirdly, when they desire to indicate more clearly in what sense they quote this or that declaration of the Old Testament books, they paraphrase in quoting them. It is then that the Holy Ghost, who, by their mouth, quotes himself, modifies the expressions which he had formerly dictated to the prophets of the ancient people. Compare, for example, Mich. v. 2, and Matt. ii. 6; Mal. iii. 1, and Matt. xi. 10; Mark i. 2, and Luke vii. 27, &c.

The learned Horne, in his "Introduction to a critical Study of the Bible," (vol. i. p. 503,) has ranged under five distinct classes, in connexion with the Septuagint version, the quotations made in the New Testament from the Old. We do not vouch

¹ Even the Talmud allows the Scriptures to be translated only into Greek. (Talmud Megillah, fol. 86.)

here for the entire accuracy of all these distinctions, nor of his figures ; but our readers will understand the force of our argument, when we tell them, that he numbers eighty-eight verbal quotations conformable to the Alexandrian translation ; sixty-four others, which are also borrowed thence, but with some variation ; thirty-seven, which agree in sense but not in words ; sixteen, which deviate from it, in order more closely to conform to the Hebrew ; and, finally, twenty-four, which differ both from the Hebrew and the Septuagint, but in which the sacred authors have paraphrased the Old Testament, that they may render the sense in which they quote them more obvious.

These numerical details will suffice for us to estimate the independence which the Holy Ghost maintains with regard to human versions, when he would cite, in the New Testament, what he had aforetime caused to be written in the Old. Thus they not only reply to the objection, but convert it into a witness.

SECTION IV.—*The Various Readings.*

We must leave the Translations, say other opponents, and admit that they in no wise affect the question of the first inspiration of the original text ; but, in this text itself, there are numerous differences between the various ancient manuscripts which our churches consult, and from which our printed editions are compiled. Before the evidence

of such a fact, what becomes of verbal inspiration, and of what use is it to us ?

Here, again, the reply is easy. We might repeat, with reference to the variations of the manuscripts, what we said respecting the translations.—Do not confound two orders of facts which are absolutely distinct—that of the first inspiration of the Scriptures, and that of the actual integrity of the copies which have been made from it. If it were God himself who dictated the very letter of the sacred oracles, we have here a settled fact ; and none of the copies which have been made from it, nor any translation of it, can annul this first act.

When a fact is consummated, nothing that follows thereupon can obliterate it from the history of the past. There are, then, before us two questions which must be most carefully distinguished. Was the entire Scripture divinely inspired ? is the first question, and to this we must first apply ourselves. The second is—Are the copies made by learned men and monks, in later times, accurate ? This latter question can in no degree affect the former ; do not, therefore, by a strange perversion, seek to subordinate the first to the second : they are altogether independent. A book is from God, or it is not from God. In the latter case, it would be vain for us to transcribe it a thousand times with accuracy : we could not make it divine. And in the first case, equally vain would it be for us to make a thousand incorrect copies : our inability, inaptitude, or unfaithfulness, could not at all invali-

date the divinity of the original. The Decalogue, we will here repeat, was entirely written by the finger of Jehovah, on two tables of stone; but supposing the manuscripts which have transmitted it to us do exhibit some variations, this latter fact would not prejudice the former. The sentences, words, and letters, of the *Ten Commandments* would not the less have been written by God. The inspiration of the first text, and the integrity of the subsequent copies, are two orders of facts absolutely different, and separated widely the one from the other. Be careful not to confound what logic, time, and place, require us to keep distinct.

It is by precisely analogous reasoning, that the indiscreet admirers of the Apocrypha are reproved. The ancient oracles of God, they are told, were confided to the Jewish people, as, in these last times, the new oracles have been to Christians. If, therefore, the book of Maccabees was a simple human book in the days of Jesus Christ, a thousand decrees of the christian church could not so operate as that in 1560 (becoming what it had never been up to that period,) it should be transubstantiated into a divine book. The prophets wrote the Bible either with words of human wisdom, or with words given them by God. This is the question before us. But you will perhaps say, have they been faithfully copied from century to century, from manuscript to manuscript? This is doubtless important, but it is wholly a different

question. Do not confound what God has separated.

It is undoubtedly true, it will be said, that the fidelity of a copy does not render the original divine when it is not so; and the inaccuracy of another copy does not render it human, if it be not human. (This is not the point we aim to establish.) The fact of the inspiration of the sacred text, in the time of Moses, or of St. John, cannot, of course, depend upon the copies which we have made from it in Europe or in Africa, two or three thousand years after them; but if the second of these facts does not destroy the first, at least it renders it illusory, by depriving it of its value and utility.

Here, then, is that which embraces the objection. The question has been shifted; it no longer bears upon the inspiration of the first text, but an attack is now directed against its present integrity. It was, in the first place, a question of doctrine; viz.—“Is it declared in the Bible, that the Bible is inspired even in its language?” But it is now reduced to a mere question of history or criticism; viz.—“Have the copyists transcribed accurately? Are the manuscripts faithful?” We might be silent on a thesis of which we are not here commissioned to undertake the defence; but the answer is so easy, I will say more,—God has rendered it so triumphant, that we cannot forbear giving it. Moreover, on this subject the faith of the simple has been so often disturbed by a sort of scientific phantasmagoria, that it may be useful to demon-

strate it. And although this objection takes us rather out of the field of our treatise, we must reply to it.

Had this difficulty been presented to us in the days of Anthony Collins, and the *Free-thinkers*, surely we should not even then have been without an answer; but we should, perhaps, have felt some embarrassment, because the facts were not, at that period, completely elucidated, and because the field of conjectures, then unexplored, was limitless. The perplexities which beset the excellent Bengel on this question are known; and that these excited those laborious researches into the sacred text, which afterwards called forth his admiration and his devout gratitude for its conservation. What matters to me (it would have been said), the assurance that the first text has been dictated by God, eighteen hundred years ago, if I have no longer the assurance that the manuscripts of our libraries contain it in its purity; and if it be true (as we are assured,) that the variations of these ancient transcripts are at least in number, thirty thousand?

This is the old objection; it was once specious, but in the present day it is regarded, by all who have examined it, as but a baseless illusion. The rationalists themselves have avowed that it is valueless, and must be renounced.

The Lord has miraculously watched over his word. Facts demonstrate this. In the first place, by constituting the Jewish churches its depositories, and afterwards those of Christians; his providence

thus charged itself with watching, that the oracles of God should be faithfully transmitted to us. This has been done; and to attain to this result, various causes were brought into operation, of which we shall have to speak hereafter. Recent researches of science have placed this fact in the light of day. Herculean labours have been undertaken in the last century, (especially in the latter part, and in the commencement of the present,) to collect all the readings, *or variations*, which could be supplied, either by the diligent examination of the manuscripts of the sacred writings, preserved in the various libraries of Europe, the study of the most ancient versions, or the investigation of the innumerable quotations made from the sacred books throughout the writings of the fathers of the church:—and this immense labour has furnished a result admirable in its insignificance; imposing (shall I say?) by its nullity.

For the Old Testament, we have the indefatigable investigations, and the four folio volumes of Father Houbigant; the thirty years' labour of Michaëlis; especially, too, the great critical edition of the Bible by the celebrated Dr. Kennicott, and his ten years' examination of five hundred and eighty-one Hebrew manuscripts; and, finally, the collation of six hundred and eighty manuscripts of Professor Rossi: and for the New Testament, the not less important investigations of Mill, Bengel, Wetstein, Griesbach, (into three hundred and thirty-five manuscripts for the Gospels alone); the late researches

of Nolan, Matthæi, Lawrence, and De Hug, and especially those of Scholz, (with his six hundred and seventy-four manuscripts for the Gospels, two hundred for the Acts, two hundred and fifty-six for the Epistles of St. Paul, and ninety-three for the Apocalypse, without reckoning his fifty-three *Lec-tionaria*). This immense combination of labour has established so convincingly the astonishing preservation of the text, copied, nevertheless, so many thousand times (in Hebrew, during thirty-three centuries, and in Greek, during eighteen hundred years), that the hopes of the enemies of religion, in this channel, have been overwhelmed, and, as Michaëlis has said,¹ "They have ceased to hope for any thing from the critical researches which they were, at first, so vehement in recommending, because they expected discoveries which have not been made." The learned rationalist Eichhorn also himself acknowledges that the different readings of the Hebrew manuscripts collated by Kennicott scarcely afford enough interest to repay the labour bestowed upon them.² But these very miscalculations, and the failure of these expectations, have been for the church of God a precious discovery. This was what she expected; but she has to rejoice in owing it to the labours of her adversaries:—"In truth," says a scholar of our times, "if we set aside those admirable *negative* conclusions at which they have arrived, the obvious result obtained by the lives of so many men

¹ Michaëlis, vol. ii. p. 266. ² Einleitung, 2 Th. s. 700.

consumed in these mighty researches, appears to be nothing; and it may be said, that to arrive at it, they have foolishly squandered time, talent, and science."¹ But, as we have said, this result is immense in its nothingness, and all-powerful in its insignificance. When it is remembered that the Bible has been copied during thirty centuries, as no book of man ever was, or ever will be; that it has borne with Israel all their vicissitudes and captivities; that it was transported for seventy years to Babylon; that, from the days of the Philistines to those of the Seleucidæ, it has been so often persecuted, forgotten, interdicted, and burnt; when it is remembered, that from the time of Jesus, it had to endure the first three centuries of imperial persecutions, in which those convicted of having it in their possession were sentenced to be torn by wild beasts; after which came the seventh, eighth, and ninth centuries, in which were everywhere multiplied false books, legends, and decretals; the tenth century, in which so few men knew how to read, even among princes; the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth, in which the use of the Scriptures, in the vulgar tongue, was punished with death;—in which the writings of the ancient fathers were mutilated, and in which were curtailed and falsified so many ancient traditions, and even the decrees of emperors and of councils;—in the remembrance of all this, it will be well understood how necessary it was that God should always keep his powerful arm uplifted, in

¹ Wiseman. Discourse on the Reports, &c. I. II. disc. x.

order that, on the one hand, the Jewish church should give us, in full integrity, that word which records their rebellion, predicts their ruin, and testifies of Jesus; and, on the other, that the christian churches (the most powerful of which, and especially the Roman sect, prohibited the people reading the sacred books, and set aside the word of God for the traditions of the middle ages) should, notwithstanding, transmit to us, in all their purity, those writings which condemn all their traditions, images, dead languages, absolutions, and celibacy; which tell us that Rome will be the seat of a fearful apostasy, in which “that man of sin would be revealed,—sitting as God in the temple of God,—making war on the saints,—forbidding to marry,—and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created;” in which, of images, it is said, “Thou shalt not bow down to them;” of unknown tongues, “Thou shalt not use them;” of the cup, “Drink ye all of it;” of the Virgin, “Woman, what have I to do with thee?” and of marriage, “It is honourable to all.”

Now, although all the libraries which possess ancient copies of the sacred books, have been summoned as witnesses; although the commentaries of the fathers of every country have been examined; although the Arabic, Syriac, Latin, Armenian, and Ethiopic versions, have been compared; although all the manuscripts of all countries, and of every age, from the third to the sixteenth century, have been examined a thousand times, by innumerable

critics, who sought with ardour, as the reward and glory of their sleepless toil, for some new reading; and although the learned, not content with the libraries of the West, have visited those of Russia, and extended their researches to the convents of Mount Athos, of Asiatic Turkey, and of Egypt, in quest of new records of the sacred text;—yet has nothing been discovered, says the learned author we have already quoted, not even a single reading, which can cast doubt upon any of the passages hitherto received as authentic. All the variations, with scarcely one exception, leave untouched the essential meaning of each sentence, and relate merely to points of a secondary importance, such as the insertion or omission of an article or conjunction, the position of an adjective before or after its substantive, and the accuracy, more or less important, of a grammatical construction.

Is any standard required for the Old Testament? we have one in the celebrated Indian manuscript of the Pentateuch, which has recently been deposited in the University of Cambridge.

The pious and learned Claudius Buchanan, on visiting, thirty-three years ago, the black Jews of Malabar, who inhabit the western peninsula of India, (and who are thought to be the remnant of the first dispersion, under Nebuchadnezzar,) found among them an immense roll, composed of thirty-seven skins, dyed red, forty-eight feet long, and twenty-two inches wide, and which, when perfect, must have been about ninety English feet in length.

The sacred writings have been traced upon it by different hands. There remain seventeen columns, beautifully written; and the only deficiency was, the book of Leviticus, and a portion of Deuteronomy. Buchanan succeeded in getting this ancient and precious monument, which was used in their synagogue worship, confided to him, and it was afterwards deposited in the library of the Cambridge university. It has been clearly ascertained that this roll could not have been transcribed from a copy brought thither by European Jews; for Mr. Yeates has recently examined it most carefully, and has been at the pains of comparing it, word by word, and letter by letter, with our Hebrew edition of Van der Hooght. He has made public the result of his researches; and what has he discovered? Why that there do not exist, between this Indian manuscript and that of the West, more than forty trifling differences, not one of which is of sufficient importance to justify even the most trivial change in the sense and interpretation of our ancient text; being simply the addition or retrenchment of a (י) *i*, or a (ו) *v*, letters, the absence or presence of which, in Hebrew, cannot alter the value of words.¹

It is well known that among the Jews, it was the profession of the Masorites, or doctors of tradition, to transcribe the Scriptures; we know to what extent these indefatigable scholars carried

¹ *Vide* Christian Observer, vol. xii. p. 170. Examination of an Indian Copy of the Pentateuch, p. 8. Horne's Introduction and Appendix, p. 95, edition 1818.

their respect for the letter ; and, when we read the rules under which their labours were carried on, we understand the use that the providence of God, (who had “confided his oracles to the Jews,”) made of their reverence, severe exactitude, and even of their superstition. They reckoned the number of verses, words, and letters, in each book. They tell us, for instance, that the letter א occurs forty-two thousand three hundred and seventy-seven times in the Bible ; the letter ב thirty-eight thousand two hundred and eighteen times ; and so on to the end. They were scrupulous of changing the position even of a letter, though evidently misplaced, but limited themselves to noting it in the margin, supposing some mystery was involved. They tell us which is the middle letter of the Pentateuch, as well as of each of the books of which it is composed. They never allowed themselves to correct their manuscript ; and if any mistake escaped them, they rejected the papyrus, or the skin, which they had blemished, and recommenced upon a fresh one ; for they were equally interdicted from even correcting one of their errors, and from retaining for their sacred volume a single parchment or skin in which an erasure had been made.

So far the Old Testament,—but think not that the Providence which watched over this holy book, and confided it to the Jews, (Rom. iii. 1, 2,) has less protected the oracles of the New Testament, which were committed by God to his new

people. To these he has not left less reason for gratitude and confidence.

We would here notice the recent experience of the authors of a version of the New Testament, which has just been published in Switzerland, and in the lengthened labour of which we have ourselves participated. A single feature may convey to the minds of all classes of readers, the utter insignificance of the different readings which the manuscripts present. The translators in question, strictly and undeviatingly followed what is called the *received text*; that is to say, the Greek text of Elzevir, 1624, which has been so long adopted by all our churches. But as the first plan of their work enjoined upon them the introduction of the most approved variations in their original text, resulting from the critical researches of the last century, they were often in difficulty, because they found it impossible, even by the most literal renderings, to delineate the new shade which this correction gave to the Greek. The French language is, even with the most scrupulous rendering, not flexible enough to give expression to these differences; as a cast taken from a monarch's face, might faithfully transfer to brass the noble features, without being able to pourtray all its minute veins and delicate lines.

We desire, however, to give those of our readers who are unacquainted with sacred criticism, two or three other standards, which may be more easily

apprehended, whereby they will be enabled to estimate the providence which, during a period of thirty centuries, has guarded our sacred writings.

1. We would say,—Compare the two Protestant translations of Ostervald and Martin. There are few modern versions which so closely assimilate. Both were made from the ancient version used by the pastors of Geneva, at nearly the same time, and in the same spirit; they differ so little from each other, especially in the New Testament, that our Bible Societies distribute both indifferently, and one feels a difficulty in giving either the preference. Nevertheless, if you will be at the trouble of noting their differences, and taking strict account of them, as was done when our four hundred manuscripts of the New Testament were compared with each other, we will predict (and we think we are under the truth) that these two French copies are three times, and, in many chapters, ten times, more dissimilar than is the Greek text of our printed editions: we do not say this of *the least esteemed* among the Greek manuscripts in our libraries, but of ALL THEIR MANUSCRIPTS, TAKEN TOGETHER. By which we mean, that if any talented and evil-disposed man (as, in the last century, the unhappy Voltaire, or the too celebrated Anthony Collins, might have been) had the whole of the manuscripts of the East and West at his command, and sought in them to find the most imperfect renderings and the most material variations from our received text, with the perfidious intention of composing as

defective a copy as possible ; such a man, we say, (even in employing the variations, which in the four or five hundred manuscripts in our libraries, would amount to ONE ONLY,) after the full exercise of his malevolent industry, could not produce a Testament less similar to the one in use in our churches than is that of Martin to Ostervald's. And this, moreover, might be circulated instead of the true text, with as little inconvenience as would attend the giving French Protestants that of Martin instead of Ostervald, or Ostervald instead of Martin, and might be done with far less scruple than would be felt at the circulation of the version of De Sacy among members of the Romish church.

Undoubtedly the versions referred to are only translations, whilst all the Greek manuscripts take the character of original copies ; and it must be admitted that, in this respect, our comparison is very imperfect ; but it is not, therefore, less expedient to give confidence to the friends of the word of God, by making them understand how truly insignificant the variations are.

We have now to speak of something more direct and precise.

In order to present to our readers, in some measure at one view, the number and importance of the collective readings in the manuscripts of our libraries, we will here give two specimens. In the first place, a table of the first eight verses of the Epistle to the Romans, with ALL THE VARIATIONS which occur, in ALL THE MANUSCRIPTS of the East

and West; and afterwards a table of the entire Epistle, with ALL THE CORRECTIONS which the celebrated Griesbach (the oracle of modern criticism) has thought necessary to introduce.

We have taken these passages at random, and we can affirm that no reason connected with our argument has induced us to choose them in preference to others. It gives us pleasure to place these concise statements before those whose position is not favourable to the investigation of sacred criticism for themselves, and who may have been a little unsettled by the mysterious and decided language which has been so frequently employed on this subject by the rationalists of the last century. To hear them, might it not be supposed that modern science was about to give us a new Bible, to dethrone the Saviour, to restore to man (so calumniated by our theology!) all his claims to innocence, and to rectify the entire doctrines of our venerable orthodoxy?

As the first mode of comparison, our columns will commence with the first eight verses of the Epistle to the Romans, showing the differences between the *single* text of Martin (1707) as compared with the *single* text of Ostervald (*Bagster's edition*); whilst the following Tables (instead of comparing one single manuscript with any other one) will exhibit the differences between *our received text* and ALL THE MANUSCRIPTS which it has been possible to collect, up to the time of Griesbach. This indefatigable scholar examined, for the Epistle

to the Romans, first, seven manuscripts, of *uncial* letters, or Greek capitals, supposed to be thirteen or fourteen hundred years old, (viz.—1. The *Alexandrian*, in the British Museum—2. That of the *Vatican*—3. That of *Cardinal Passionei*, at Rome—4. The *Ephrem*—5. That of *St. Germain*—6. That of *Dresden*—7. That of *Cardinal Coislin*;) and afterwards, one hundred and ten manuscripts, in *small letters*, together with thirty others, the greater part of which came from Mount Athos, collated by the learned Matthæi, who, to accomplish this object, travelled for so long a time through Russia and the East.

For the four Gospels, Griesbach consulted as many as three hundred and thirty-five MSS.

THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

CHAPTER I.

	<i>Text of Ostervald.</i>	<i>Text of Martin (1707).</i>
Ver. 2.	Qu'il promis auparavant	Lequel auparavant promis
3.	de la race	de la semence.
4.	Et qui, selon l'esprit ... a été a été déclaré avec puissance, l'esprit de sainteté, par sa résurrection <i>savoir</i> , Jésus-Christ notre Sei- gneur.	Et qui a été selon l'Esprit a été pleinement déclaré en puissance l'Esprit de sanctification, par la résurrection c'est-à-dire, notre Seigneur Jésus-Christ.
5.	afin d'amener tous les gentils à l'obéissance de la foi	afin qu'il y ait obéissance de foi parmi tous les Gentils,
Ver. 6.	du nombre desquels vous êtes aussi, vous qui avez été appelés	Entre lesquels aussi vous êtes, vous vous qui êtes appelés

Ver. 7. appelés et saints.	appelés à être saints,
La grâce et la paix	Grace vous soit et paix
vous soient données	vous soient données
de la part de Dieu notre	de par Dieu notre Père,
père,	
et de	et de par
notre Seigneur Jésus-Christ.	le Seigneur Jésus-Christ.
8. Avant toutes choses,	Premièrement
au sujet de vous tous	touchant vous tous
est célèbre.	est renommée.

The differences between these two French texts are unimportant enough; and if we were told that either one or other of the two was throughout inspired of God, our faith would be greatly strengthened. We shall now show that the variations of the Greek manuscripts are still more insignificant. In connexion with these same verses, we now present a table of the received text, compared with *all the differences* which the hundred and fifty Greek manuscripts could present, collected and collated for the Epistle to the Romans. We shall not notice either the differences which the ancient translations supply, or those which belong to the punctuation (this being scarcely ever found in the most ancient manuscripts).

We shall translate the first column (that from the received text) according to Martin, who is considered more literal than Ostervald; and shall endeavour to render the Greek readings of the second column as accurately as possible.

The Textus Receptus (Elz. 1624). *Various Readings gathered from ALL the Greek Manuscripts, combined.*

Ver. 1. (No difference.)

2. par ses prophètes.

par les prophètes.

(In a single MS. at Paris.)

Ver. 3. qui est né.	qui a été engendré. (<i>In a single MS. at Upsal, and by the simple change of two letters.</i>)
4. qui a été pleinement déclaré.	qui a été prédéclaré. (<i>In one only of the 22 MSS. of the Barberini library.</i>)
notre Seigneur Jésus-Christ.	de Jésus-Christ notre Dieu. (<i>In a single MS. at Vienna.</i>)
5. (no difference.)	
6. (no difference.)	
7. qui êtes à Rome, bien aimés de Dieu, appelés.	qui êtes dans l'amour de Dieu appelés. (<i>A single MS., that of Dresden, in uncial letters.</i>)
	qui êtes à Rome, appelés. (<i>Two MSS. only; that of St. Germain, in uncial letters, and another at Rome, in small letters.</i>)
par Dieu notre père.	de Dieu notre père. (<i>A single MS. at Upsal.</i>)
8. Premièrement.	Premièrement. (<i>The difference cannot be expressed. It exists in a single MS. only.</i>)
touchant vous tous.	au sujet de vous tous. (<i>Twelve MSS.</i>)

We see then that these nine or ten different readings are, in themselves, quite unimportant; and, moreover, that they have in their favour only two manuscripts, out of the *hundred and fifty* which we have been able to consult for these eight verses; excepting the last (*au sujet de vous tous*, instead of *touchant vous tous*), which has twelve manuscripts in its favour, four of which are in *uncial* (capital) letters.

The differences which exist between Ostervald and Martin are three times as numerous; and, in general, as affecting the sense, are far more important. This comparison, if extended throughout the

New Testament, would bear the same proportion, and become even far more striking.

It may, furthermore, be acceptable to those of our readers who have not pursued such investigations as these, to see, in a third table, another proof of the unimportance of the variations, and of the nullity of the objection which is based upon them.

This will include the entire corrections which the learned Griesbach, the father of sacred criticism, has thought necessary to introduce into the text of the Epistle to the Romans, after the extensive examination of manuscripts to which he devoted himself, and after all those of his predecessors. A participation in such labours can alone give an idea of their immensity.

We would observe with regard to this third table,

1. That Griesbach is, in general, accused by scholars (Matthæi, Nolan, Lawrence, Scholz, and others), of being too eager to admit new readings into the ancient text. The force of habit explains his proneness to fall into this snare. The learned Whitby had previously, and not without reason, made a similar charge against Dr. Mill, who, however, has not permitted himself to make so many corrections as Griesbach.

2. It should be further noticed, that we show in this table, not only the corrections which this eminent critic was persuaded he ought to *adopt*, but also those considered *doubtful* in his own estimation, and which ought not to be preferred to the received text without some hesitation.

THE CORRECTIONS MADE BY GRIESBACH IN THE
EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

THE RECEIVED GREEK TEXT,
Translated by Martin (1707.)

GREEK TEXT,
*Corrected by Griesbach,
(and translated by us, into French, with the
greatest possible exactness.)*

CHAPTER I.

- Ver. 13. de recueillirquelquefruit. de recueillir quelque fruit.
*(A change in the order of the words only.)
(de recueillir fruit quelque.)*
16. je ne prends point à honte. je ne prends point à honte.
*(The difference cannot be expressed by
translation.)*
17. l'Évangile de Christ. l'Évangile.
19. car Dieu. car Dieu.
(The difference cannot be expressed.)
21. ne l'ont point glorifié. ne l'ont point glorifié.
(A variation of spelling.)
24. C'est pourquoi aussi. c'est pourquoi.
27. tout de même. tout de même.
(A difference untranslatable.)
29. de toute injustice, de pail- de toute injustice, de méchan-
lardise, de méchanceté. ceté.
31. sans affection naturelle, sans affection naturelle, sans mi-
gens qui jamais ne se sérécorde.
apaisent, sans miséri-
corde.

CHAPTER II.

9. indignation et colère. colère et indignation.
13. ceux qui écoutent la loi. ceux qui écoutent la loi.
(The removal of the article.)

CHAPTER III.

22. envers tous et sur tous envers tous ceux qui croient.
ceux qui croient.
25. par la foi. par la foi.
que l'homme est justifié que par la foi l'homme est jus-
par la foi. tifié.

- Ver. 28. Nous concluons donc. nous concluons en effet.
 29. ne l'est-il pas. ne l'est-il pas.
(The difference cannot be expressed.)

CHAPTER IV.

1. Que dirons-nous donc qu'Abraham. . a trouvé Abraham.
 Abraham notre père. Abraham notre ancêtre.
 4. comme une chose due. comme chose due.
 12. dans le prépuce. en prépuce.
 13. héritier du monde. héritier du monde.
(A difference which cannot be translated.)
 19. et n'étant pas faible en la foi, il n'eut point d'é- d'égard à.
 gard à.

CHAPTER V.

14. de Moïse. de Moses.

CHAPTER VI.

1. demeurerons-nous. demeurons.
 11. que vous êtes morts. que vous *êtes* morts.
 en J.-C. notre Seigneur. en J.-C.
 12. pour lui obéir dans ses pour *lui* obéir.
 convoitises.
 14. soit du péché à la mort, soit du péché, soit de l'obéissance
 soit de l'obéissance à la à la justice.
 justice.

CHAPTER VII.

6. la loi par laquelle étant morts à la loi par laquelle.
 étant morte.
 10. le commandement qui. le commandement qui.
(A variation of an accent only.)
 14. charnel. charnel.
(A difference of a letter.)
 18. je ne trouve pas. je ne trouve pas.
(Variation in spelling.)
 20. et si je fais ce que je ne et si je fais ce que, moi, je ne veux
 veux point. pas.
 25. je rends grâces à Dieu. grâces à Dieu.

CHAPTER VIII.

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Ver. 1. Pour ceux qui sont en Jésus-Christ, lesquels ne chemine point selon la chair, mais selon l'Esprit. | pour ceux qui sont en Jésus-Christ.
<i>(The words omitted here are found in verse 4.)</i> |
| 11. par son Esprit (<i>Martin says</i> : à cause de son Esprit) qui habite en vous. | à cause de son Esprit qui habite en vous. |
| 26. à nos faiblesses.
ce que nous devons demander. | à notre faiblesse.
ce que nous devons demander.
<i>(Difference too slight to be expressible.)</i> |
| prie pour nous par des soupirs. | prie par des soupirs. |
| 35. pour l'amour de toi. | pour l'amour de toi.
<i>(The difference untranslatable.)</i> |
| 37. ni les anges, ni les principautés, ni les puissances, ni les choses présentes, ni les choses à venir. | ni les anges, ni les principautés, ni les choses présentes, ni les choses à venir, ni les puissances. |

CHAPTER IX.

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 11. ni bien ni mal, afin que le propos arrêté selon l'élection de Dieu. | ni bien ni mal, afin que le propos arrêté de Dieu selon l'élection.
<i>(A difference difficult to express.)</i> |
| 15. il dit à Moïse. | il dit à Moïse. |
| 31. comme par les œuvres de la loi. | comme par les œuvres. |
| 32. car ils ont heurté. | ils ont heurté. |
| 33. quiconque croit en lui. | qui croit en lui. |

CHAPTER X.

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. que je fais à Dieu pour Israël.
c'est qu'ils soient sauvés. | que je fais à Dieu pour eux.
c'est qu'ils soient sauvés.
<i>(A difference quite inexpressible.)</i> |
| 5. Moïse. | Moses. |

- Ver. 15. qui annoncent de bonnes choses. qui annoncent de bonnes choses.
(*The difference cannot be rendered.*)
19. Israël ne l'a-t-il point connu ? Ne l'a-t-il point connu, Israël ?
Moïse. Moses.

CHAPTER XI.

2. contre Israël, disant : Seigneur . . . contre Israël : Seigneur . . .
Seigneur . . .
3. et ils ont démolé les autels. ils ont démolé les autels.
6. Si c'est par la grâce, ce n'est plus par les œuvres; autrement la grâce n'est plus grâce; mais si c'est par les œuvres, ce n'est plus par la grâce, autrement l'œuvre n'est plus œuvre.
7. il ne l'a point obtenu. il ne l'a point obtenu.
(*Difference untranslatable.*)
19. les branches ont été retranchées. des branches ont été retranchées.
21. il ne t'épargne point. il ne t'épargne point.
(*The difference cannot be rendered.*)
23. et eux-mêmes aussi. et eux-mêmes aussi.
(*Variation of spelling.*)
30. et comme vous avez été vous-mêmes autrefois. et comme vous avez été autrefois.

CHAPTER XII.

2. et ne vous conformez point . . . mais soyez transformés. et que vous ne vous conformiez point . . . mais que vous soyez transformés.
- par le renouvellement de votre entendement. par le renouvellement de l'entendement.
11. servant le Seigneur. servant à l'occasion.
(*The difference affects but two letters; the one changed, the other transposed.*)
20. si donc ton ennemi a faim. si ton ennemi a faim.

Ver. 29. avec une abondance de bénédiction de l'évan- gile de Christ.	avec une abondance de bénédic- tion de Christ.
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CHAPTER XVI.

2. car elle a été hôtesse.	<i>(Difference which cannot be expressed.)</i>
3. Priscille.	Prisca.
5. qui est les prémices d'Achaïe.	qui est les prémices d'Asie.
6. qui a fort travaillé pour nous.	qui a fort travaillé pour vous..
18. ne servent point N. S. J.-C.	ne servent point N. S. Christ.
20. la grâce de N. S. J.-C. soit avec vous! Amen.	la grâce de N. S. J.-C. soit avec vous!
25. or, à celui qui est puis- sant...	<i>(These words, according to Griesbach, should be placed at the commencement of the 15th chapter.)</i>

The above comparison plainly demonstrates the unimportance of these variations upon which so much stress has been laid.

Such has been the astonishing preservation of the Greek manuscripts which have handed down the New Testament to us,—after the sacred text has been copied and re-copied so many thousand times in Europe, Asia, or in Africa, in convents, colleges, palaces, or in presbyteries, and this almost without interruption, during the long course of a thousand five hundred years;—notwithstanding during the last three centuries (and especially during the lapse of the last hundred and thirty years), so many noble characters and ingenious minds, and so many learned lives, have been devoted to labours hitherto unheard of in extent, admirable

for their sagacity, and scrupulous as those of the Masorites;—after the collation of all the Greek manuscripts of the New Testament, which were buried in the private, monastic, or national libraries of the East and West;—after comparing them not only with all the ancient Latin, Armenian, Sahidic, Ethiopic, Arab, Sclavonic, Persic, Coptic, Syriac, and Gothic versions of the Scriptures, but also with all the ancient fathers of the church, who have quoted them in their innumerable writings, in Greek or in Latin;—after so much research, see, by one sample, what they have been able to find! Of this you can judge from the epistle before us. It is the longest and most important of the New Testament Epistles, “the golden key of the Scriptures”—“the ocean of christian doctrine,” as it has been termed. It contains four hundred and thirty-three verses, and in these four hundred and thirty-three verses are ninety-seven Greek words which are not elsewhere met with in the New Testament. And now how many—(even admitting all the corrections adopted, or only preferred by Griesbach)—how many renderings have you found which would, in the slightest degree, change the meaning of any sentence? You have found but five! And what are there more? We will recapitulate them.

The first occurs in chap. vii. 6. Instead of “*Celle dans laquelle . . . étant morte,*” Griesbach reads, “*Étant morts à celle dans laquelle.*” And let it be particularly remarked that, in the Greek, the difference merely amounts to the *changing of a single*

letter—an *o* instead of an *e* ; and that, moreover, the greater number of the manuscripts were so entirely in favour of the ancient text, that (since the time of Griesbach) Tittmann, in his edition of 1824, has rejected this correction ; and so has Lachman, in his edition of 1831. Scholz has, however, preserved it.

The second occurs in chap. xi. 6. Instead of, "*Si c'est par la grâce, ce n'est plus par les œuvres, autrement la grâce n'est plus la grâce ; mais si c'est par les œuvres, ce n'est plus par la grâce, autrement l'œuvre n'est plus une œuvre,*" Griesbach suppresses the last part of this sentence.

The third occurs in chap. xii. 11. Instead of, "*Servant le Seigneur ;*" Griesbach reads, "*Servant à l'occasion.*"

Remark here, that the correction only involves the changing of *two letters* in one of the Greek words, and that the majority of the manuscripts do not appear to justify even this. Moreover, on this point, Whitby remarks that upwards of thirty manuscripts, and all the ancient versions—that Clemens Alexandrinus, St. Basil, and St. Jerome—all the writings of the Greek and Latin scholastics (St. Ambrose only excepted)—followed the ancient text ; and the learned men whom we have named above (Lachman and Tittmann), the former prosecuting his labours at Berlin, the latter a professor at Leipsic, have restored the ancient text in their respective editions of the New Testament. Scholz has just done the same in his

edition of 1836, which the learned world appear to prefer to all those that have preceded it.

The fourth occurs in chap. vi. 16. Instead of, "*Soit du péché à la mort, soit de la justice ;*" Griesbach reads, "*Soit du péché, soit de la justice ;*" but he himself inserts at this place the simple sign of a bare probability. Tittmann and Lachman, in their respective editions, have also rejected this correction ; and Scholz, in following them, has done the same.

The fifth is, chap. xvi. 5. Instead of, "*Des premières d'Achaïe ;*" Griesbach reads, "*Les premières d'Asie.*"

We have not here shewn the words which have been omitted in the first paragraph of chap. viii., because they are again found in the fourth verse.

Here, then, we see the admirable integrity of the Epistle to the Romans. According to Griesbach, *only four unimportant corrections* in the entire epistle ; according to more modern critics, but two—and these the most unimportant of the four ; and according to Scholz, THREE.

We repeat, that we have selected the Epistle to the Romans as a specimen, only on account of its length and importance, without having examined whether it contains more or fewer variations than any other portion of the New Testament. We have, however, just run through Griesbach, and in the last pages of the EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS, (written at the same time, and on the same subject, as the Epistle to the Romans,) we have

found only the three following corrections, which can be said to affect the sense; or, more properly speaking, the form of the sense:—

CHAP. VI. 17. Ils nous veulent exclure. *Read*—Ils vous veulent exclure.

— — 26. Elle est la mère de nous tous. *Read*—Elle est la mère de nous.

— v. 19. L'adultère, la fornication, l'impureté. *Read*—La fornication, l'impureté.

These simple Tables, as we judge, will speak more forcibly to our readers than any general assertions on our part. There are certain truths which must be seen with our own eyes; of this we have ourselves had the happy experience. We have undoubtedly read what others have said before us, on the unimportance of the different readings which the manuscripts present; and we have often examined the variations of Mill, and the severe reproaches of his antagonist Whitby;¹ also the writings of Wetstein, Griesbach, Lachman, and Tittmann; but when, in taking part, for the second time, in the work of a new version of the New Testament, it devolved upon us to correct the French text according to the most esteemed variations,—in the first place for their introduction, and afterwards to abridge them, and substitute the sense of the ancient reading,—we gained, by this two-fold operation, as it were, an intuitive knowledge of this astonishing preservation of the Scriptures, and we felt our minds overflowing with gratitude towards that adorable Providence, which has

¹ *Examen variantium lectionum.* J. Millii. Lond. 1710.

never ceased to watch over the Oracles of God, to preserve their integrity.

Let the value of the objection now be weighed by those who make it.

Let them, for instance, explain to us how the three or four variations which have just passed in review before us, in the Epistle to the Romans, (and which modern critics have reduced to one or two,) can throw any doubt upon the fact of its first inspiration. Without doubt, in these three or four passages, as well as in those in other parts of the sacred books, in which the true word of the text may be contested, without doubt, here, (but here only,) between the two different readings of the manuscripts, one is the inspired word, and not the other; and it is necessary that, in this trivial number of instances, we must divide or suspend our confidence between two expressions; but this is the extent to which incertitude can go,—here it must stop,—farther it cannot proceed.

It is calculated that, in the seven thousand nine hundred and fifty-nine verses of the New Testament, there scarcely exist ten or twelve in which corrections introduced by the new texts of Griesbach and Scholz, at the close of their laborious investigations, have any weight. These, moreover, do not for the most part extend beyond the difference of a single word, and sometimes even of a single letter. It may, perhaps, be well again to introduce them here, as supplementary to those which we have pointed out in the Epistle to the Romans.

It has been customary to regard the following twelve or thirteen corrections as the most important of those which have been collected by Griesbach. The first four have appeared important, only because they are connected with the divinity of Jesus Christ.

1. (Acts xx. 28.) Instead of, "Feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood;" the text of Griesbach has, "Feed the church of the Lord, which he has purchased with his own blood."

Here the difference of the reading preferred by Griesbach consists in A SINGLE LETTER, ($\overline{\text{KY}}$ instead of $\overline{\text{OY}}$). Scholz preserves the ancient text.

2. (1 Tim. iii. 16). Instead of, "And it must be confessed, the mystery of godliness is great. God has been manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit," &c.; some manuscripts read, "And it must be confessed the mystery of godliness is great, which has been manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit," &c.

But a few other manuscripts, which Griesbach has followed, read, "And it must be confessed, the mystery of godliness is great; that which has been manifested in the flesh, has been justified in the Spirit," &c.

Here, again, the difference is in a single letter only, or rather only in two portions of a letter. (Some manuscripts, instead of $\Theta\Sigma$, having $O\Sigma$, and others O .)

Scholz has not admitted these corrections of Griesbach. Almost all the Greek manuscripts, according to him, have $\Theta\epsilon\acute{o}\varsigma$ (God). He says he found it in the eighty-six manuscripts which he himself examined.

3. (Jude 4.) Instead of, "Who deny our only ruler, God and Lord, Jesus Christ;" the text of Griesbach and that of Scholz read, "Who deny our only ruler and Lord, Jesus Christ."

Here the difference is only in those two letters, ΘΝ, (God,) omitted in the manuscript which Griesbach prefers.

As to the opponents of the divinity of Jesus Christ having laid stress upon these first three corrections, in a critical point of view, we do not marvel, (it is all they can find); but in a doctrinal point of view we cannot understand it, because, by their own confession, there are numerous other passages without variations, in which our Lord is called by the name of God,—the true God,—the great God. No Greek manuscript, for instance, exhibits variations in the first verse of the Gospel by St. John: "*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*"¹

Furthermore, not a single Greek manuscript contains any variation in the verse of the Epistle to Titus (ii. 13): "*Looking for the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ.*"

It is known that Wordsworth, in order to convince himself of the meaning which was attributed to this passage, (and to the following:—Eph. v. 5; 2 Thess. i. 12; 2 Tim. iv. 2; Jude 4; 2 Pet. i. 1; 1 Tim. i. 1,) at the period when the

¹ One single manuscript in three hundred and fifty, of the eighth or ninth century, puts an article before the name of God, which, however, does not affect the sense.

Greek was a living language, did not shrink from the task of examining the voluminous writings of seventy Greek and sixty Latin contemporary fathers; and he found that they invariably understood these constructions in the same sense, as designating one only and the same person. During the space of a thousand years (from the second to the twelfth century), he found fifty-four authorities among the Greek, and sixty among the Latin fathers, who unanimously gave the same sense to the words of Paul (Titus ii. 13): "Our great God and Saviour." The heretics themselves, he observes, during the long triumph of Arianism, never once thought of translating this passage otherwise than ourselves. "Doubtless (remarks the Arian Bishop Maximin, in the fifth century) the Son, according to the apostle, is not a little God (*non pusillus sed magnus Deus*), but a great God, according to those words of Paul (Titus ii. 13), 'looking for,'" &c.¹

4. (1 John v. 7, 8.) Instead of, "*There are three that bear record [in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are ONE ($\text{^{\circ}EN}$); and there are three which bear witness] on earth, the Spirit, the water, and the blood, and the three agree in this ONE*" ($\text{TO}^{\circ} \text{^{\circ}EN}$); the text of Griesbach reads, "*There are three which bear witness in the earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood; and these three agree in that ONE*" ($\text{TO}^{\circ} \text{^{\circ}EN}$).

¹ See the Six Letters of Wordsworth to Granville Sharp.

This is doubtless the most important variation, and at the same time the best supported; both according to the testimony of the manuscripts which have been preserved to our time (upwards of 140 against 3), and also by the universal silence of the Greek fathers thereon. We should deviate from our subject, were we here to undertake a review of the historical evidences¹ and the grammatical considerations which, on the other hand, plead for the preservation of the ancient text; we, therefore, confine ourselves to these two remarks of Bishop Middleton.

First, Why is the word *the three* in the masculine, in the Greek Τρεῖς—οἱ μαρτυροῦντες, whilst the words *spirit, water, and blood*, with which they are connected, are all neuter? It would have been necessary to say τρία—τὰ μαρτυροῦντα. This irregularity, which is fully warranted (by that which is grammatically termed *the principle of attraction*), if the passage remained entire, becomes inexplicable when you would retrench the disputed words.

Secondly, Why, especially the word *this one* (τὸ ἐν, *the one*), if a certain one had not been spoken of in the preceding words? This expression (τὸ ἐν) in this case, would be without example! Bishop

¹ Those of several Latin fathers of the second, third, fourth, and fifth centuries; according to the Latin Vulgate, more ancient than the most ancient manuscripts of our public libraries (which are said to be of the fifth, or end of the sixth century); and especially that of the Confession of Faith, publicly presented in A.D. 484, by four hundred African bishops, to the king of the Vandals, who, as an Arian, persecuted them, and demanded an account of their doctrines. (See the Dissertations of Mill, Griesbach, Bengel, Wetstein, and Lee.)

Middleton devotes eighteen pages to it, in his valuable book on "The Doctrine of the Greek Article," (8vo, Cambridge, 1828, pp. 606—624.) "I cannot conceive," he remarks, in conclusion, "how this word, this ONE ($\tauὸ \epsilonἷς$) can be reconciled with the retrenchment of the preceding words. I am not ignorant that the majority of learned men are in favour of this omission; but taking all together, I am led to suspect that, notwithstanding the immense labour which has been bestowed upon this notable passage, there remains yet more to do to elucidate the mystery in which it continues enveloped." The learned Bengel (for yet other reasons) said that the two verses of this passage would remain united *adamantinâ adhærentiâ*.

Scholz has retrenched, as Griesbach, the three heavenly witnesses.

5. (Rev. viii. 13.) Instead of, "*And I beheld and heard an angel flying,*" &c.; the text of Griesbach and that of Scholz have, "*And I beheld and heard an eagle flying.*"

6. (James ii. 18.) Instead of, "Show me thy faith by works;" the text of Griesbach and that of Scholz have, "Show me thy faith without works."

7. (Acts xvi. 7.) Instead of, "But the Spirit suffered them not;" the text of Griesbach and that of Scholz have, "But the spirit of Jesus suffered them not."

8. (Eph. v. 21.) Instead of, "Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God;" the text of Griesbach and that of Scholz have, "Sub-

mitting yourselves one to another in the fear of Christ."

9. (Rev. i. 11.) Instead of, "I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last;" the text of Griesbach suppresses these words, which, however, he has preserved in the 5th verse; as also in chapter xxii. 17. Scholz has made the same correction.

10. (Matt. xix. 17.) Instead of, "Why callest thou me good?" the text of Griesbach reads, "Why do you inquire of me concerning the good (or concerning goodness)?" But Scholz does not admit this correction, and has preserved the ancient text.

11. (Phil. iv. 13.) Instead of, "I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me;" Scholz has, "I can do all things through Him who strengtheneth me."

12. Lastly. (Acts viii. 37; ix. 5, 6; x. 6.) The text of Griesbach and that of Scholz suppress the 37th verse, and the words, "It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks; and he, trembling and astonished, said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" and, "I will tell thee what thou must do."

Doubtless, I repeat, in these passages, besides the various readings which the manuscripts exhibit, it would not be possible to know infallibly which of the readings is that which ought to be regarded as the primitive text, or word given by God; but as respects the sense of the sentence, our incertitude will always be circumscribed within very narrow and determined limits. I must, it is true, choose between one word and another, between one letter and another, but to this

all my doubts are limited, and beyond this they are not at liberty to range : not only, in fact, have I the assurance that the remainder of the text is wholly and entirely from God, but I know further, that between the two diverse readings which the manuscripts present, one of the two is certainly the *theopneustic* word. Thus, you perceive, my uncertainty here can only hesitate between the alternative of two readings, almost always nearly identical one with the other ; whilst in the system of a partial inspiration, on the contrary, the field of our doubts and incertitude would be illimitable. If the language of the sacred Scriptures has been, in part, left to the choice (always fallible) of human wisdom, and if divine wisdom (alone infallible) has not controlled and guaranteed it, I am unceasingly exposed to the temptation of retrenching, modifying, or adding something to the Scriptures.

Thus, then, all the efforts of the adversaries of inspiration, to shake our faith in this channel, have, finally, but had the effect of strengthening it. They have compelled the church to follow them in their investigations, and very soon afterwards to precede them ;—and what has been the result ? Why, that the text is found more pure than the most pious ventured to hope ; and that the opponents of inspiration, and those of orthodox doctrines, (at least in Germany,) have been compelled to come to the same conclusion. After the labours of Erasmus, Stephens, and Mill, they had hoped to have derived, from among the numerous manuscripts of our

libraries, readings more favourable to Socinian doctrines than those which they could gather from Beza and the Elzevirs. Several indeed anticipated that the differences would be so great, and such uncertainty would result, that (to use their own terms) all exclusive, positive, evangelical belief, would be thereby scattered to the winds. But it has not been thus. It is now a suit terminated; the plaintiffs are cast, at their own appeal; the inquest having been held by modern criticism: all the judges—even the bench of Rationalists,¹ have unanimously pronounced it is a lost cause, and that the objectors must go to some other quarter for arguments.

When this question of the integrity of the original text presented itself, for the first time, (upwards of one hundred and twenty years ago,) to the learned and estimable Bengel, he was dismayed at it; and his upright and pious mind became deeply exercised. Then commenced, on his part, that work of sacred criticism which gave a new direction to this science in Germany. The English had preceded the Germans; but the latter soon outstripped them. At length, in 1721, after long and laborious research, Bengel, who had become satisfied and happy, thus wrote to his disciple Reuss:—"Eat the Scripture bread in simplicity, just as you have it; and do not be disturbed, if here and there you find a grain of sand which the mill-stone may have suffered to pass. You may hereby avoid all the doubts which, for a

¹ Read *Michaëlis*, vol. ii. p. 266.—*Eichhorn*, *Einleitung*, 2 th. s. 700, edit. Lips. 1824.

season, so horribly tormented me. If the holy Scriptures, which have been so often copied, and have so often passed through the erring hands of fallible men, were absolutely without variations, this would be so great a miracle, that faith in them would be no longer faith. I am astonished, on the contrary, that from all these transcriptions there has not resulted a greater number of different readings." The comedies of Terence alone contain thirty thousand variations, and yet they are but six in number,¹ and they have been copied a thousand times less frequently than the New Testament.

We have now said enough on this important fact. We had need but to touch upon it, for the purpose of repelling an objection, since it diverts from our subject; our object was to prove a doctrine, viz.—*the first inspiration* of the holy Scriptures; and it has been thought that we could be opposed by showing, that the doctrine, however true, would be rendered powerless by the alterations which holy Scripture had undergone. It was imperative upon us to show that these alterations are a vain and harmless phantom. We were occupied with a doctrine; we have been made to trace its history; we shall now return to the doctrine; previously, however, we come once more to the conclusion, that not only was Scripture inspired at the time when God caused it to be written; but that this word, which was inspired eighteen centuries ago, is now

¹ Archives du Christianisme, vol. vii. No. 17. Wiseman, Discourse on the Relations of Science, &c. vol. ii. p. 189.

demonstrated, that, before an impartial examination, all these difficulties vanish ; light is thrown upon what appeared obscure ; and, eventually, inconceivable harmony and beauty, such as the human mind never had conceived, stand revealed in the word of God ; to the manifestation of which, even objections are made subservient. What is an object of doubt to-day, would, by further study, become a motive of faith to-morrow ; and what is to-day a subject of perplexity, would to-morrow be converted into proof.

2. We, nevertheless, take cognizance of all these accusations, which the adversaries of plenary inspiration bring against this holy book, on account of the advantage they afford us. Yes ; we do not hesitate to assert, that on hearing such objections, we feel, at once, two opposite emotions—those of sorrow and of satisfaction : of sorrow, to see men, who acknowledge the Bible to be a revelation from God, not fearing to advance against it the most serious accusations ; and of satisfaction, in considering how forcibly such language, on their part, helps to confirm the doctrine which we are defending.

In the mouth of a Deist these would be objections, which we should have to answer ; but in that of the professing Christians who advance them, it is a flagrant abandonment of the truth which they ought to defend, and an admission of all the evil which is connected with it.

Let us here be well understood ; it is not before professed infidels that we here maintain the plenary

inspiration of the Scriptures ; but before those who hold the Bible to be a revelation from God. Inspiration, we have told them, is a doctrine written in this sacred book : according to its own testimony, all Scripture is given by God ; “ it is perfect, it is pure, it is as silver seven times purified.” What was their reply ? We only reject, say they, such inspiration with regard to language, modes of speech, and unimportant details. They, moreover, believe that a continual Providence has guided the minds of the sacred writers in order to preserve them from serious error ; but how do they prove this thesis ? Do they limit their questioning merely to language, forms of speech, and insignificant details ? Alas, no ! Hear them :—“ Superstitions are mingled with doctrines ; there are false views involved in the quotations ; and in the reasoning there is infirmity !” Thus, it is manifest, that in order to attack the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures, they descend into the ranks of infidels, who cast stones at the word of God ; and if they do not desire, with them, to divorce God from the Bible, they, at least, wish to correct God in his divine word. Which of these two aims is the more daring, it would be difficult to say.

We, therefore, conclude, that since the plenary inspiration of Scripture cannot be combated without imputing error to the word of the Lord, it is imperative upon us to entrench ourselves more firmly in the declaration of the Holy Spirit, that “ all Scripture is given by inspiration of God.”

3. But we have to expose something yet more serious. We ask,—Where will those who contend for partial inspiration stop in the course upon which they have entered? And by what reasoning will they be able to check those who would go much farther than they? Those who venture to correct one word of God's truth, what right have they to interfere with others who would correct the remainder? The beings of a moment, rapidly traversing this earthly scene, with the eternal book of God in their hands, daringly say to him,—“This, Lord, is worthy of thee: and this is not worthy of thee!” They pretend to discriminate the oracles of God, attributing one portion to the folly of man, and separating the mind of God from the conceits of Isaiah and Moses; pointing out the prejudices of St. Peter or St. Jude, the paralogisms of St. Paul, and the superstitions of St. John! Lamentable temerity! We repeat the question—Where will they stop in their disastrous course? They take their place, side by side, with Socinus, the Grimaldis, and the Priestleys; the Rousseaus, the Volneys, and the Dupins. Between them and Eichhorn, William Cobbett and Strauss, where is the difference? It is in degree, and not in kind. It is in the quantity of imputed errors and irreverent accusations, and not in their quality: there is a difference of audacity, but not of profanation. Both assert that they have found errors in the word of God; and both affect alike to correct them. But let us ask, is there less presumption in a creature to aim

at amending, in the works of God's creation, the hyssop which springs out of the wall, than the cedar which grows on Lebanon? to pretend to improve the organization of the glow-worm, than to increase the light of the sun? What right have men, who say that they can only see in the accounts given in the Gospels respecting devils, and the miraculous casting out of unclean spirits by Christ, the language of Jewish prejudice;—what right, we ask, have they to think it strange that others can only see in the miraculous conversion of Paul, the Resurrection, the multiplied loaves, and the Pentecostal visitation, nothing more than a wise and useful compliance with the ignorance of a people who were enamoured of the marvellous? By what right would a professor, who would deny the inspiration of the reasonings of St. Paul, blame M. de Wette for rejecting that of the prophecies of the Old Testament,¹ or M. Wirgmann for his *divarication* of the New,² or M. Strauss for changing into mythological sorceries the miracles, and even the person of Jesus Christ?

It is now about four years ago, that a young minister of Berne induced us to read a manual of theology which, he said, had been put into his hands

¹ This was his view some years ago. We do not know whether this Professor, whose knowledge and candour, in his translation of the New Testament, we have admired, may not have withdrawn such assertions. ² *Divarication du Nouveau Testament* is the title of his book. (Translated from the English, by Lambert. Paris, 1838.) "He understands (he says) by this, the division of the New Testament into *the Word of God*, or Moral Precepts; and *the Word of Man*, or facts of the visible world."

in an academy of East Switzerland. We do not remember either the name of the author, or his place of residence; but having, at the time, taken a note of his principal arguments against the plenary inspiration of Scripture, we are enabled here to reproduce the quotations by which he endeavoured to prove that the holy books, containing evident errors, could not be entirely a word of God. It will be understood that we shall not here stop to answer him. We merely desire to give a sample of his profanities.

“ St. Paul (1 Cor. v. 5) charges them ‘ to deliver over an incestuous person to Satan.’ Can this passage (fanatical without doubt) be inspired?”

“ He tells them (1 Cor. vi. 3), ‘ We shall judge angels.’ Can such a gnostic reverie as this be called an inspiration?”

“ In Cor. xi. 30, he goes so far as to tell them, ‘ that on account of their unworthiness in communion, many are sick among them, and many sleep in death.’ This passage cannot be inspired?”

“ He tells them (1 Cor. xv. 22), ‘ that in Adam all die.’ This is a Jewish superstition: it is impossible that such a passage can be inspired.”

“ And when St. Paul assures the Thessalonians (1 Thess. iv. 15), and St. James repeats it (James v. 8), ‘ that the coming of the Lord draweth nigh;’ can so manifest an error be inspired?”¹

¹ We have not felt it incumbent upon us to reply to such accusations; to do so would not be within the scope of our subject. The coming of the Lord is nigh to every one of us: from one instant to another, a breath alone separates us from it. When a man dies, he

It is thus that men dare to judge the eternal word! We are still ignorant, as we have said, if these doctrines which were professed in Switzerland about twelve years ago, were more prevalent at Zurich than elsewhere; but if they had free circulation there, we must (alas! not to be unjust) excuse the magistrates of that town. It was not they who summoned M. Strauss to their country, to overthrow the faith of an entire people; for Strauss, it might be said, was already in the divinity chairs of the doctors who promulgated such sentiments. These were seen, scissors in hand, cutting out from the Scriptures the errors of the apostles: what difference was there between them and him whom they called? This latter had a little more learning, boldness, and stability in his principles; and the pruning-knife, in his well-exercised hands, was keener than were their instruments; but there was scarcely more contempt in his heart for the Scriptures of God. We make little distinction between the judges of the Sanhedrim, who smote Jesus on the face, as to the number of blows given by each; and when the sixty conspirators in Pompey's palace deposed Cæsar from his golden throne, in the midst of the senate, Casca, whose sword merely grazed his sovereign's skin, was not less his murderer than Cassius, who clave his skull, or than the other conspirators, who beset him on all sides, and inflicted

immediately enters upon the day of Jesus Christ. With regard to the distance of this day, relatively to the world, see in 2 Thess. ii. whether the apostle Paul is mistaken therein.

upon him three-and-twenty wounds. Is then the scholar who denies the inspiration of an argument, or doctrine, of the Scriptures, less in revolt against the God of the Scriptures, than he who rejects the inspiration of an entire book? We judge not.

We therefore conclude that, since the denial of the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures involves such impious sentiments, and raises the signal for every kind of revolt against the word of God, we must only cling more closely to the declaration of the Holy Spirit, that, "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God."

Our final reflection on this point is :—

4. You do not understand the divinity, expediency, wisdom, or utility, of such and such passages of Scripture, and, on this account, you deny their inspiration! Is this an argument which can have any real value, we will not say in our eyes, but in your own? Who are you? "Keep thy foot (feeble child of man) when thou goest into the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to offer the sacrifice of fools; for they consider not that they do evil: God is in heaven, and thou upon earth."¹ Who are you who thus sit in judgment upon the oracles of God? Scripture has itself forewarned us, that it would be to some "a stumbling-block, and to others foolishness;" that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God;" that "he cannot know them, because they are

¹ Eccles. v. 1, 2.

spiritually discerned.”¹ Is it not natural, then, for you to feel some repugnance of mind, heart, and even conscience, against the first teachings of the Spirit? Man must take his proper position as a weak, ignorant, and depraved creature! He cannot understand God until he has humbled himself. Let him fall on his knees in his closet; let him pray, and he will understand. An argument is not well sustained, because you fail to apprehend it!—a doctrine is a prejudice, because you do not concur in it!—a quotation is void of force, because you do not understand its true sense! What would remain in our world, if God had left us only what you can explain? The emperors of Rome, unable to understand either the life or the faith of the martyrs, threw them to be torn of beasts in the amphitheatre, or cast them into the Tiber. It is thus that cavillers throw their ignorance, like an infected barb, against the word of God, and expose to scorn what they cannot understand, what they have condemned. Whilst writing these lines, we recall to mind a scholar, otherwise to be respected, but imbued with the wisdom of his age, who set himself to prove that the arguments of St. Paul are not inspired. To demonstrate this, what did he do? He cited, as a convincing example, a passage from Galatians iii. 16, in which the apostle proposes, not to PROVE (let this be especially remarked, for the entire solution is here), but to AFFIRM that the promise made by God to *Abraham and to his seed*, regarded not *all his*

1 Cor. ii. 14.

seed (since it was evident that his descendants by Hagar, Keturah, and Esau, had been rejected), but a special, elect, and personal posterity. But what does this professor do in order to establish his thesis on this passage? Why, he attributes so puerile an argument to the apostle that a very child among the Galatians might have confuted him. According to his view, St. Paul, instead of *affirming* a fact, has argued from the *singular* of a *collective noun*, to *prove* that such a word could only designate a single person! This argument, he goes on to say, might do for Jews, or the ignorant Gauls of Asia Minor; but to us it is an absurdity. We give this as one instance: a hundred others might be cited of equal value.

Will the author here venture to give us his own experience? He calls to mind, with equal humiliation and gratitude, his first and last impressions of the Epistles of St. Paul. In his youth, he was enabled to acknowledge that the Bible was from God, but he could not, then, comprehend the doctrines it inculcated. He wished to respect the apostolic records, because he saw, by other traits, that the inimitable impress of God Most High was upon them; but a secret perplexity agitated his mind as he perused them, and led him to consult other books. St. Paul appeared to him to reason falsely, to speak ambiguously, to avoid coming to the point by his constant circumlocution, and to speak altogether in a different way to that in which we might ourselves have expressed it. In a word, he felt

while reading them, just the painful uneasiness which a tender and dutiful son experiences by the side of an aged, tottering parent, who has lost his memory, and become childish. How fain would he conceal from others, and from himself, if possible, his venerable father's weakness,—his dissimilarity to his former self! But as soon as divine grace shall have revealed to us this doctrine of the righteousness of the faith which is the bright and effulgent glory of the Scripture, then every word becomes light, harmony, and life; the arguments of the apostle become transparent as the limpid wave,—his ideas profound and practical,—all his epistles “the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth.” We see abundant proofs of divinity break forth in the very portions of Scripture which had so long perplexed us, and we can exclaim with the joy of a discovery, and with lively gratitude and praise, on finding the hitherto silent chords within us vibrate in unison with the divine word, “Yes, my God, thy Scriptures are, throughout, divinely inspired!”

But it is further insisted that there are :—

SECTION VI.—*Errors in the Narratives, and Contradictions in Facts.*

Others will lay aside (we are told), if it must be so, all this just repugnance against the arguments or doctrines of the sacred writers, by admitting that what is a difficulty to some, is not one to others. But if, now, they appeal to facts,—if they

show that there are manifest contradictions in the narratives of the Bible, in its dates, in its allusions to contemporaneous history, and in its scriptural quotations, we could yet, perhaps, retort upon them, their having seen these, their not being consistent with themselves, and with going, herein, beyond their own position. This, however, is of no consequence; here are facts which cannot be disposed of by a plea of non-admission, and which no mere reasoning can destroy. Argument can no more annihilate facts, than it can create them. If, therefore, these contradictions exist, (they add,) it may be they will convict their thesis of insufficiency; but they rise in three-fold power against ours, to accuse it of error.

We will begin by acknowledging that if it were true, as they say, that there are erroneous facts and contradictory narratives in the Holy Scriptures, we must renounce the defence of their plenary inspiration. But we can make no such admission. These pretended errors do not exist.

We undoubtedly would admit, that amongst the numerous attacks levelled at the most minute details of the narratives in the sacred books, there are some which, at first sight, may occasion a little perplexity; but on a closer examination, these difficulties explain themselves and vanish. Of these we shall give some examples, taking care to select them from among those which the adversaries of a plenary inspiration appear to have regarded as the most insurmountable. On these we shall proceed to offer a few prefatory observations.

1. The Scriptures have, throughout all ages, had their opponents and defenders; their Celsus, as well as their Origen; their Porphyry, as well as their Eusebius; their Castellion, and their Calvin; their Strauss, and their Hengstenburg. It is now sixteen hundred years since Malchus Porphyry, that learned and malevolent Syrian, who lived in Sicily, under the reign of Dioclesian, and whom Jerome styles *rabidum adversus Christum canem*,¹ wrote fifteen books against Christianity. Of these, the fourth was directed against the Pentateuch; the twelfth and thirteenth, against the book of Daniel; whilst the first was entirely devoted to a collection of all the contradictions, which he pretended to have found in the Scriptures.² From Celsus and Porphyry, to the incredulous English of the eighteenth century, and from these last to Strauss, (who has had little more to do than to copy his predecessors,³) the search after new grounds of objection, has been ceaselessly pursued. By comparing Scripture with Scripture, line with line, word with word, and detail with detail, it was, indeed, easy to multiply them, and even to find some that were specious, in a book eminently anecdotal; in which narratives of the same events are repeated, in a variety of forms, by different historians, under

¹ A mad dog against Christ. Eccles. Writings, preface. ² Τὸν καθ' ἡμῶν συσκευὴν ὑπερβόλη μισοῦς προβεβλήμενον, says Eusebius, in speaking of him. Euseb. Prepar. Evangel. book x. chap. ix. and Euseb. Eccles. Hist. vi. 19. ³ This he has himself avowed, on the Critical Review of the Gospels, examined and collected from Celsus to Paulus, and even to the fragments of Wolfenbüttel.

diverse circumstances, with multiplied objects, more or less detailed. By this, the reader must see, that this fifth objection, which is exclusively composed of detached observations, and which resolves itself into an infinity of trivial details, can only be refuted in detail, and by detached refutations. It would be an endless task to give to each passage its objection, and to each objection its reply. The only general answer we give, is — Examine, and all obscurity will disappear.

It is, moreover, admitted by all parties, that the pretended contradictions advanced by the adversaries of inspiration, are in themselves of no religious importance, and only affect dates, names, or other very minute circumstances. But if they are too unimportant directly to affect the christian faith, they would not, on this account, have less tendency directly to overthrow the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures. They must, therefore, be replied to. This is what the friends of religion have undertaken in every age ; this is what M. Hengstenburg has just accomplished, with most honourable success, at Berlin ; and this is, also, what, in later times, M. Roussel, in France, and Barrett, Hales, Gerard, Dick, Horne, and others, have done in England.

2. It is very easy to say, generally and peremptorily, that there are contradictions in the Bible ; and it often happens that unreflecting, though pious Christians, indisposed to the trouble of close examination, suffer their notions of inspiration to become relaxed, before, on the one hand, they have

sufficiently examined the general testimony of Scripture on this point; or, on the other, the nature of the objections which have been opposed to it. They have thus been found seeking in their own minds, rather than in the Bible, for a mitigated system of inspiration, which can be reconciled with the pretended existence of errors in the word of God. This was, in the sixteenth century, the doctrine of Socinus,¹ Castellion,² and of some others; but it was, at the time, strenuously opposed by all pious men. "*Hoc non est causam tueri adversus atheos*, (said Francis Turretini,³) *sed illam turpiter prodere*."—"Non est eò concedendum, ad ea concilianda, ut dicamus codicem sacrum mendosum,"⁴ said also the learned and pious Peter Martyr, whom Calvin has styled, "The wonder of Italy." In our own time (in England) the estimable Dr. Pye Smith⁵ and the worthy Bishop of Calcutta,⁶ have penned sentences which we deplore, and which they would probably correct if they had to re-write them. At Berlin, also, the learned rector of the University, M. Twes-ten, whose labours and reputation we otherwise honour, has not scrupled to say, in his Lectures on Divinity,⁷ that "all is not equally inspired in the Holy Bible, and that if error in the details of evangelical narratives, were not admitted, their

¹ On Scriptural Authority. ² In Dialogis. ³ Theol. elencht., vol. i. p. 74. ⁴ In Reg. viii. 17. ⁵ Defence of Dr. Haffner's Preface to the Bible. ⁶ Twelfth Lecture on the Evidences of Christianity. ⁷ Vorlesungen über die Dogmatik, vol. i. pp. 421—429, Hamburg, 1829.

explanation would involve inextricable difficulties." And what examples does he give, by the way, to justify such assertions? He quotes two of the passages, which we shall presently review;—the first, relative to the two blind men of Jericho; and the second, to the taxing under Cyrenius. The reader may, therefore, judge of the facility with which the testimony borne by the Scriptures themselves to their own entire inspiration, is abandoned.

We shall now present some examples, both of the contradictions which objectors think they can oppose to us; and of the causes of that rashness, under the influence of which they permit themselves to denounce, as contradictory, certain passages, which, nevertheless, only require a little reflection to be perfectly reconciled. We have already said, and we will repeat it, that being able here only to cite a small number, we have been careful to select those which our adversaries have appeared to think the most difficult.

FIRST CAUSE OF RASH CONCLUSIONS.—The completion of the circumstances of two facts which took place in the East, eighteen hundred years ago, remains unknown, because of the extreme brevity of the recitals of the sacred historians. Consequently, if the narratives do not explain in what manner some of their features may be reconciled, they are precipitately denounced as contradictory! Nothing can be more irrational. Suppose (to take an example without the pale of Scripture), a Hindoo pundit read three brief histories (but each of the three

true) of the illustrious Napoleon. The first would tell him that the taking of Paris, preceded by a great effusion of blood at the gates of the capital, compelled him to abdicate, and that an English frigate was ready forthwith to convey him to an island in the Mediterranean. A second would relate that this renowned captain was conquered by the English, who entered Paris without opposition, and conveyed him to St. Helena; that General Bertrand voluntarily proceeded thither with him; and that he there breathed his last in the arms of this faithful servant. A third would record that the fallen emperor was accompanied in his exile by Generals Gourgaud, Bertrand, and Montholon. Every one of these statements would be true; and yet, "What a mass of contradictions in a few words!" would the wise man of Benares exclaim. "St. Helena in the Mediterranean! Who does not know that this isle rises like a rock in the midst of the mighty ocean!—this is contradiction the first. One of these books is a lie, and must be rejected! But, further, Paris taken without a contest! and Paris taken after a bloody battle at its gates!—contradiction the second. In one account we have one general; in another three!—contradiction the third."

Now let us compare the rash conclusions, thus supposed, to the objections which are advanced against the narratives of our evangelists.

FIRST EXAMPLE.—Mark (chap. xvi. 5) tells us *that the women "saw A YOUNG MAN (only one) sitting on the right side, who said to them, Be not affrighted,*

ye seek Jesus of Nazareth who was crucified: he is risen."

And Luke narrates (chap. xxiv. 4), that "**TWO MEN stood by them, who said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen.**"

These two passages are objected against as irreconcilable, but with what justice? There is a difference, doubtless; but there is neither a contradiction nor a disagreement between the two accounts. If they are both true, why is it desired that they should both be identical? It is sufficient that they are true, especially in narrations which are so admirably concise. Does it not frequently occur among ourselves, that, without failing in accuracy, we relate the same circumstance, to different persons, as we meet with them, in two different ways? Why should not the apostles do the same? St. Luke records that "two men" stood by the women; whilst St. Mark only speaks of him, of the two, who had rolled away the stone, who was sitting alone on the right side of the sepulchre, and who addressed them. In like manner, one of the historians of the life of Bonaparte mentions three generals; whilst the other, without any incorrectness, only speaks of Bertrand. It is thus that Moses (Gen. xviii.), after speaking of the appearance of three men, as he sat in the tent door, in the plains of Mamre, immediately afterwards (verses 2, 10, 17) speaks of one only, and this as if he were alone. It is thus that at two different times, and in two different ways,

I could, with entire truth, relate the same circumstances. For instance: "I met three men who pointed out to me the direct road;" or, "I met a man who put me into the right road." If there is in the passages in question a notable difference, there is not, however, even the semblance of a contradiction.

SECOND EXAMPLE. — Matthew (chap. xx. 30) states that, "*as Jesus departed from Jericho, followed by a great multitude, two blind men, sitting by the way side, when they heard that he passed by, cried out, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou Son of David!*"

And Mark (chap. x. 46) tells us that, "*as he went out of Jericho, with his disciples, and a great number of people, blind Bartimæus sat by the highway side begging. And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me!*"

Luke also (chap. xviii. 35) speaks of *only one blind man*.

Here again we would inquire, what is there contradictory or incorrect in these different statements? Of these two blind men, whom Jesus, in the midst of so many works, healed near Jericho, one was more remarkable than the other; better known, perhaps, in the country, and who alone might have appealed to Jesus for both. Mark only speaks of this one; he goes so far as to communicate his name; but he does not assert that he was alone. Matthew might then make mention of the two.

The narratives of the three evangelists are equally true, without being, in every particular, similar. What is there extraordinary in this?

But, we are told, there is, in this very narrative, a far greater difficulty; and it is this:—

THIRD EXAMPLE.—Matthew and Mark relate, that the circumstance happened *as Jesus departed from Jericho*; whilst Luke states, that it took place *as he was come nigh to Jericho*. And this difference has more than once been denounced as a “palpable contradiction!”

How will you prove it? What do you know about it? must we answer. The details of this fact being unknown to you, how would it be possible for you to show that they are irreconcilable? whilst, on the contrary, it is very easy, by the most simple supposition, to demonstrate their agreement.

St. Luke, as he so often does in the course of his Gospel, has combined in his narration two successive circumstances of the same event. It must be particularly remarked, that he alone, of the three historians, makes mention of the first question of Bartimæus (ver. 36); “And hearing the multitude pass by, he asked, what it meant?” This question was put by him *previously to the entrance* of Jesus into Jericho. Having been informed that he was the great Prophet, whom until then he knew not, he follows him to the house of Zaccheus, and takes his place among the multitude who awaited his coming out. It was then “*they told him, that Jesus of Nazareth passeth by,*”—(these words are in St.

Luke),—and he goes on with them until joined by the other blind man, and thus their healing takes place when Jesus (on his way to Jerusalem) *departs* from *Jericho*, where he only tarried to be the guest of the favoured Zaccheus. This very simple explanation dispels at once the alleged discordance in the three accounts.

FOURTH EXAMPLE.—St. Matthew (chap. xxvii. 5) says that *Judas* “*went and hanged himself.*” St. Peter (Acts i. 18) says that “*falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out.*”

This has also been held up as an evident contradiction.

We well remember that, at Geneva, in a public conference, where we defended this very thesis, in conjunction with our beloved friend, Professor Monod, then pastor of Lyons, he, by way of illustration, cited the analogous features of a suicide, of which he had recently been all but an eye-witness. To make sure of accomplishing the dreadful deed, a wretched inhabitant of Lyons adopted the two-fold means of seating himself outside a window on the fourth floor of his residence, and of firing a pistol into his mouth. The same narrator of this desperate act (observed the professor) might give three different versions of it, and all three accurate ones. In the first, he would give the fact minutely, with every particular; in the second, he would say that he terminated existence by blowing out his brains; and in the third, that he precipitated him-

self from an upper story, upon the pavement, and was killed.

Such was also the voluntary fate by which Judas "went to his own place." He strangled himself, fell headlong, and burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out. One single detail more, on the fearful circumstances of such a death, would have shown us the connexion of the whole. It has not been given; but who, on this account, will dare to say that there is here a contradiction?

FIFTH EXAMPLE.—Here it appears to me desirable to enumerate the majority of those cases in which various numerical calculations may appear to be at variance; as, for instance, that of the talents of gold brought from Ophir to king Solomon (1 Kings ix. 28; 2 Chron. viii. 18); that of the numbering of the Israelites in the time of David (2 Sam. xxiv. 9; 1 Chron. xxi. 5); that of the children of the patriarch Jacob, transported into Egypt (Gen. xlv. 26, 27; Deut. x. 22; Acts xii. 14), &c. One single circumstance, in addition to these rapid recitals, will at once place them in accord before us. King Solomon might, in the one case, have reckoned the gross amount of his revenue, and in the other have deducted thirty talents therefrom for the expenses of the navy. The numbering of David might exhibit two results, according as it included, or was exclusive of, the ordinary military force (militia) already numbered throughout the kingdom (288,000 men, with their officers of every rank, 1 Chron. xxvii. 1; 2 Sam. xxiii. 8).

Finally, there might be sixty-six, seventy, or seventy-five persons for the family of the patriarch, according as we reckon, on the one hand, Jacob with Joseph, and his two sons; on the other, Ifer, Onda, and Dinah; and to these latter may be added the wives of the eleven patriarchs. We abstain, however, from entering into the examination of these details; it is necessary only to point them out.

SIXTH EXAMPLE.—St. Matthew, in the twenty-seventh chapter of his Gospel (verses 9 and 10) quotes, as from Jeremiah, words which are not recorded in the book of that prophet. “*Then (he writes) was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, And they received the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, and whom (men) among the children of Israel did value,*” &c.

This has been denounced as “an evident error!” these words being only met with in the book of Zechariah (xi. 13).

We will not reply, with St. Augustine, that several Greek manuscripts have only the words, “Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by the prophet;” let us, therefore, follow those only which do contain the name of Jeremiah.¹ It is true, that even in the present day, among the Greek manuscripts of our public libraries, there are two which do not record the name of this prophet;—and that among the most ancient versions, the Syriac

¹ “Possumus ergò dicere his potius codicibus esse credendum qui Jeremiæ nomen non habent.”—*De Concensu Evang.* lib. vii. c. 7.

and Persic also, it is not recorded. This solution, however, does not appear to us in harmony with the ordinary rules of sacred criticism; and St. Augustine himself ingenuously admits that he is not satisfied with it, because, even in his time, the majority of the Latin and Greek copies contained, in this sentence, the name of *Jeremiah*.

Some learned men, consequently, presume that this name might easily, by error, have crept into the text; and that the transcribers, having remarked in the margin these letters, *Zov* (which are used as an abridgment of the name of *Zechariah*), may inadvertently have made it *'Iov*, and thus run it into the text, thinking they read the name of *Jere-miah*. But neither are we satisfied with this explanation, because it only rests upon an hypothesis gratuitously opposed to the manuscripts themselves, and because it opens the door to rash conclusions. Let us respect the integrity of manuscripts! In this lies our security.

I prefer, therefore, the explanation of Whitby, which is this: we know by St. Jerome, he observes, that there existed in his day an apocryphal book of the prophet Jeremiah, in which the words quoted by St. Matthew are found, letter for letter.¹ It is also known that the second book of Maccabees (ii. 1—9), records many of the actions and words of Jeremiah, which are taken from another book,

¹ "Lege nuper in quodam Hebraico volumine quod Nazarenæ sectæ Hebræus mihi abtulit, Hieremiæ Apocryphum, in quo hæc ad verbum scripta reperi."—*Hierom. in Matt.* xxvii.

and not from his canonical prophecies. Why, then, should not the words quoted by the evangelist have really been pronounced by Jeremiah; and might they not have lived in the memory of the church down to the time of Zechariah, who would then himself theopneustically give them a place in holy writ? as is the case in the apocryphal words of Enoch, quoted in the Epistle of Jude;¹ or the apocryphal words of Jesus Christ, quoted by St. Paul, in the book of the Acts.² What confirms this supposition is, that the words cited by St. Matthew, are only in part found in Zechariah. Moreover, it is known that this prophet loved to record the words of Jeremiah.³ The Jews were accustomed to say that the spirit of Jeremiah was in Zechariah, and that the two prophets made one only. Mede considers it very probable that chapters ix. x. and xi. of Zechariah, were primarily written by Jeremiah; now it is the last of these chapters which contains the words quoted by St. Matthew. This evangelist could, therefore, have given them as from Jeremiah, in the same manner as the apostle Jude quotes as from Enoch the words of his verses 14 and 15.

ANOTHER SOURCE OF RASH CONCLUSIONS.—Certain reigns, as those of Nebuchadnezzar, Jehoiakim, and Tiberius, have had two commencements; and the dates assigned to them are held to be irreconcilable! The first, previously to ascending the throne,

¹ Verses 14, 15. ² Acts xx. 35. ³ See Zech. i. 4; Jer. xviii. 11; Zech. iii. 8; and Jer. xxiii. 5.

reigned three years ; the second reigned ten years with his father ; and the third was associated with Augustus in the government, from the 28th of August, in the second year of the christian era, but who, nevertheless, did not succeed Augustus until the 19th of August, in the year 14. (Velleius Paterc. ii. c. 121.)

Some examples.—2 Kings xxiv. 8 ; and 2 Chron. xxxvi. 9. See also Dan. i. 1 ; ii. 1 ; Jer. xxv. 1 ; 2 Chron. xxxvi. 5—7 ; and Luke iii. 1.

ANOTHER SOURCE OF RASH CONCLUSIONS.—The design of the Holy Ghost, in one Gospel, is not often the same as in another, where the same fact is narrated ; and yet cavillers are looking for a similarity in wording and detail ; and they make any difference a pretext for declaring them at variance, and for exhibiting them as in direct opposition.

Example.—The Holy Ghost, in the genealogy of Jesus Christ, recorded in St. Matthew (chap. i. 1—17), designs to show *the Jews* that, according to the full requirement of their law, he is the Son and Heir of all the kings of Judah, *by a legal descent* ; whilst in Luke iii. 23—38, the same Holy Ghost designs to show *the Gentiles* that Jesus Christ is the Son of David *by a natural descent*. And because, with these two distinct objects, one gives us his genealogy according to *the law*, through Solomon, the son of David, and through Jacob, the father of Joseph, who was the husband of Mary ; and the other his genealogy, *according to nature*,

through Nathan, another son of David, and through Heli, the father of Mary; it has been most unwarrantably thought possible to place them in opposition to each other.¹

ANOTHER SOURCE OF RASH CONCLUSIONS.—A text *badly translated* produces a meaning opposed to reason and history; and, forthwith, the sacred writer is accused of the grossest error! They do not give themselves the trouble to see whether, by the simplicity of a literal translation, this passage when better rendered may not be divested of every difficulty.

FIRST EXAMPLE (and it is one of those cited by M. Twesten).—St. Luke, we are told, as soon as he has spoken of *the taxing*, the ordinance for which was published by Augustus Cæsar at the time of the birth of Jesus, adds these words (ver. 2), “And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.” Hence it would follow, that St. Luke would here be found in notorious contradiction with contemporaneous history; because, at the birth of Jesus Christ, Judea was governed by Herod, and Syria was either under the government of Saturnius, or rather (from the fifth year before the christian era) that of Quintilius Varus, who succeeded him, and under whose administration Herod the Great died. The Cyrenius

¹ We shall not dwell at farther length upon this difficulty: we can but glance at the solution of it. Its full exposition would require a space far beyond the limits of these pages; and others, who have already entered into it, may easily be consulted.

(Publius Sulpitius Quirinius), under whom the second numbering took place, was not sent into the East until eleven or twelve years, at least, after the birth of Jesus Christ. The historian Josephus¹ tells us, in express terms, that this numbering was made in the year 37 after the defeat of Anthony; and the Saviour was born, at the latest, the 26th year after this great event. It is therefore asserted that St. Luke is eleven years in error, and that he has confounded these two periods and the two numberings!

Previously to answering this remarkable accusation, we would here notice its extreme improbability, even if we suppose St. Luke to have been an uninspired man only. What! Luke, the only one of the evangelists who was learned; Luke, the physician; Luke, who, further on, again speaks of the numbering of Quirinius, in reference to the celebrated revolt of Judas of Galilee (Acts v. 37), who drew away all Judea after him, and with whom much people perished; Luke, writing for all nations an historical book of twenty-four pages, which he knew would be imperishable; that this Luke should so far be mistaken as to place so important an event in the days of Herod the Great, which was but thirty years distant! What, in the present day, would be said of a physician, who, even in a passing conversation, should place the battle of Austerlitz in the days of Catherine II. and of the National Convention? And further, if this Doctor published a

¹ Ant. Jud. xvii. 15; xviii. 3.

short narrative in which so glaring an anachronism were found, what reception, think you, would he receive even from the most illiterate of his contemporaries?

It is often thus, however, when cavillers desire to make the sacred writers contradict themselves, they do not hesitate to impute almost miraculous absurdities to them!

But let us come to the passage itself. There is nothing more simple than its translation: it is a parenthesis. According to the accent and breathing which is upon the first word (*αυτη*), it becomes either a demonstrative pronoun, or a pronominal adjective; and with this alternative, the sentence ought, in the first case, to be translated literally by, "this first taxing," and in the second case, by "even the first same taxing." It is in this latter sense that the word has been rendered by the authors of the new version, published a few months ago, by a society of ministers in Switzerland; and it is that which we think ought to be adopted.

There is, therefore, nothing that is not perfectly natural and quite accurate in the account given by St. Luke. After having, in the first verse, spoken of a decree of Augustus, which began to be executed in the reign of Herod, he warns us, (in a parenthesis—verse 2,) that what was then done must not be confounded with the too celebrated numbering, of which all Judea yet retained so tragical a remembrance.—"*Even the first same taxing took place,*" says he, "whilst Cyrenius was governor of Syria."

This is the simple and literal translation of the Greek.¹

SECOND EXAMPLE.—St. Paul, (1 Cor. xv. 44,) according to the French versions, says, “There is an animal body, and there is a spiritual body;” and this latter expression has been condemned as contradictory. That which is spiritual is not a body, say objectors; and that which is corporeal cannot be spiritual. “A spiritual body! show us how this can be!” exclaims the theological professor of the Academy of Geneva, in his Treatise on the Use of Reason in Matters of Faith. But all the difficulty of showing “how this can be,” lies in the unfaithfulness of the translation. In the language of Scripture, the word so badly rendered by “*animal*,” signifies *endowed with a soul, actuated by a spirit* (γενόμενος εἰς ψυχὴν ζῶσαν — 1 Cor. xv. 45); and the word also which has been translated “*spiritual*,” signifies *actuated by the Spirit, endowed with the Holy Ghost* (πνεῦμα ἔχων, says St. Jude, ver. 19; γενόμενος εἰς πνεῦμα ζωοποιούν, says St. Paul.) There is, therefore, nothing contradictory in speaking of a glorified body, endowed with the Spirit and animated by the Spirit.

THIRD EXAMPLE.—It has often been alleged (especially by the authorities of the Romish church, who use the Vulgate,) that there is manifest error

¹ Others, by taking *πρῶτη* in the sense of *ποτέρα*, as the *πρῶτος* μὸς ἦν of John Baptist (John i. 15, 30), translate it, “This taxing was made before that Cyrenius,” &c. This translation would be more legitimate, though less natural perhaps, because the Greek, in this sense, would less resemble the ordinary style of St. Luke.

in the language of Elihu, (Job xxxvii. 18,) "Hast thou with him made the heavens, which are solid, as molten brass?" (We give here the exact Latin translation of St. Jerome:—" *Tu forsitan cum eo fabricatus es cœlos, qui solidissimi quasi ære fusi sunt ?*"

This passage, we are told, which is so manifestly at variance with facts, is that which the famed Galileo advanced before the court of Rome, when he contended against her for the rotation of the earth; and he was right in citing it, and so are others in following his example, with the view of proving that it must not be expected that the language of Scripture is always exempt from error, when they speak but of the truths of material order.

It has been often said, (and we think with propriety,) that the Holy Spirit, in presenting us with the speeches of Job's friends, became the historian, without becoming the authority; as he declares to the contrary (xlii. 7, 8,) that the Lord is angry against their foolishness—"ye have not spoken of me right, as my servant Job." But here again the entire error is in the unfaithfulness of the translation. In truth, it may be said that there are almost as many errors as words.

First error.—It is not said in the Hebrew, as *molten brass*; but like a *molten looking glass liquid*; showing that the comparison in question is relative to the brightness of the object, rather than to its *solidity*.

Second error.—Neither is it said in the Hebrew,

Thou hast made ; but, *Thou hast spread out* ; which shows that *extent* is here intended, and not *solid workmanship*.

Third error.—In supposing (which is not so) that the *heavens* are here spoken of, this word, in the Hebrew, is not taken in the accusative, but in an indirect case ; although the prefixed preposition ל be sometimes (it is said) taken accusatively, after the manner of the Syriac. Therefore it should not have been *the heavens* ; but, *for the heavens*.

Fourth error. — *The heavens* are not at all the subject here. The original word is not שמים, but עָפָר. The LXX., which renders the first of these words by *the heavens*, four hundred and thirty-seven times, has translated the last in this verse, by the word παλαιώματα,—a term having no relation with *the heavens*, and the signification of which, in this place, no one has been able to comprehend ; but whatever may be the object designed by this Hebraism, whose meaning is uncertain, it is evident, that it excludes all idea of *solidity*, and implies, on the contrary, what is *most impalpable and subtile*. Buxtorf translates it, *res tenuissima et subtilissima* ; Kimchi—*pulvis tenuissimus, qui exsufflatus ob tenuitatem evolat* ; and its root appears to signify *to pound, to wear, to plane down*. “Waters wear out stones,” says Job, (chap. xiv. 19.) The notion of a solid molten firmament is not, therefore, very appropriate. The word, in fact, is used in Isaiah, to designate “the small dust,” which lies upon the balance without affecting its equilibrium.

(Isaiah xl. 15.) It is twice translated *air* (ἀήρ) in the Septuagint;¹ eight times *cloud* (νεφέλη); and four times *mist* (νέφος).² Once only it is there rendered *firmament*; once by *the heavens*; and once *the stars* (ἄστρα),³ probably because God scattered the stars in the firmament like dust.

Fifth error.—Finally, the Hebrew does not contain the superlative *solidissimi*; but the simple adjective,—*firm, fixed*.

What, then, will be the sense of this passage? We have already said, that it is impossible to find any in the translation which the LXX. has given of it; neither is there anything to authorize that given by St. Jerome, which is objected against. If, however, we might ourselves hazard a version of this sentence, the meaning of which continues obscure, even to the most learned, we would render it literally in the following words:—"Hast thou taken part with him in forming a space for the fixed stars, in appearance *pure and brilliant* as a molten looking-glass?"⁴

FOURTH EXAMPLE. — St. Matthew (chap. iv. 5), immediately after the first temptation, says, *the devil THEN took Jesus into the holy city*; and, at the end of the second temptation, adds, by way of beginning the account of the third, "AGAIN,

¹ 2 Sam. xxii. 12, and Psalm xviii. 12. ² Rosenmüller here renders it, "nubes quæ, etsi solutæ et laxæ," &c. (*Scholia in V. T. in Jobem.*) ³ Jerem. li. 9. ⁴ We here adopt the interpretation of the Chaldee Paraphrase, which only attributes the sense of *mirror*, in this sentence, to the last word, קרנ, and which translates נר, by appearance:—"Whose appearance is that of a molten looking-glass."

the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain," &c.

St. Luke, on the contrary (chap. iv. 5), immediately after the first temptation, says, that the devil AFTERWARDS *took him to a high mountain*; and when the second temptation closes, adds, as a commencement of the account of the third, "and he brought him to Jerusalem," &c.

Thus we find the two evangelists in manifest disagreement respecting the order of the three temptations. One of the two must necessarily be mistaken in placing the last before the second. So stands the objection.

We shall see, however, that this difficulty at once disappears, when, instead of using either the version of Ostervald, or that of Martin, we betake ourselves to a more faithful translation of the original text. We might here cite a goodly number of other passages (especially in the epistles) which these two translators have rendered obscure, by not sufficiently noticing the conjunctions and adverbs, *καὶ, δὲ, γὰρ, οὖν, τότε,* &c.

It is well known that St. Luke, in writing his Gospel, has not bound himself to observe the order of time; and that his plan of record was rather to group events and instruction after the order of things. Both these biographical methods have their respective advantages. Among profane writers, for instance, Nepos has followed the former, and Suetonius the latter plan. It is, therefore, imperative that the translators of St. Luke should

carefully observe his language, and not supply it with adverbs of time, order, and place, which he did not himself intend to employ, and which give so incongruous a change to his meaning. In the passage before us, we have only to restore the Greek conjunctions, and the contradiction presented in the two French versions will immediately disappear.

St. Matthew, who invariably follows the chronological order of facts, is very careful in his use of adverbs, as he proceeds in his account of the temptation: τότε, τότε, παλιν, τότε, τότε, *then, then, again, then, then*. But St. Luke, on the contrary,—who does not propose to follow the same course, and who has no other intention than that of communicating to us the three attacks which the holy humanity of the Son of God was to sustain,—St. Luke, we say, carefully abstains from employing any adverb, either of order or time, and contents himself with ten times connecting the facts of his narrative by the copulative *and* (καὶ), which our translators have so improperly rendered by the adverbs “*then*” and “*afterwards*.”

The contradiction, therefore, does not belong to the sacred text.

ANOTHER SOURCE OF RASH CONCLUSIONS.—It is not sufficiently borne in mind, that there are words and acts which are more than once repeated in the course of the Saviour's ministry; so that it is the height of inconsideration to view that as a contradiction, in certain narratives of the two evangelists,

in which there is merely an incomplete resemblance, and in which, nevertheless, the reader may trace identical facts.

EXAMPLES.—We have, in the double miracle of the multiplication of the loaves, a striking example of the facility with which one may be led into error by this means. Twice, Jesus Christ, being moved with compassion towards the people, fed the hungry multitude in the desert. The circumstances of both these miracles have numerous and striking relations between them. If it had happened that two of the evangelists had narrated the first, and two others the second, how eagerly would cavillers have exhibited the identity of the two facts, and the contradiction of their details. “What! (it would be said,) in one case, five thousand men fed with five loaves; in the other, four thousand men fed with seven loaves! In the one case, twelve baskets (*κόφινους*) used to gather up the fragments; in the other seven, but of a different construction (*σπυρίδας*). What opposite statements!” Happily, while Luke and John have only mentioned the first miracle, Matthew and Mark, who relate the second, have also recorded the other. Had this not been so, what a shout would have been raised in the adversaries’ host!

This observation may be applied to various features in the New Testament; for instance, to the Lord’s Prayer, which, at least, was given twice to the disciples during our Lord’s ministry. See Matt. vi. 9; Luke xi. 2.

See also Matt. xii. 39 ; xvi. 1—4 ; Luke viii. 21 ; xi. 27 ; and Matt. xii. 49. Luke ix. 1 ; x. 1 ; and Matt. x. 1.

We would propose *one more example*. It does not appear, upon a close examination, that the sermon, generally called the "Sermon on the Mount" (Matt. v. vi. vii.), and that recorded by St. Luke in the last part of his sixth chapter, were delivered on the same occasion.¹ In fact, Luke omits many sentences recorded by Matthew,² and he alone adds some others, (chap. v. 24—26.) Secondly, Matthew informs us (chap. viii. 3) that the sermon which he records preceded the healing of the leper; and Luke (chap. v. 12) that his followed it. And thirdly, Luke places Matthew among the number of those whom Jesus had already called to the apostleship, and who descended with him from the mountain previously to the delivery of his sermon; whilst Matthew himself tells us that the sermon in question preceded, by a long interval, his calling. Fourthly, and lastly, one of the sermons was delivered *on the mountain*, whilst Jesus, who was seated, had his disciples round him; the other, on the contrary, was delivered in the plain, and under other circumstances. We dwell upon this remark for the benefit of those who may have heard the doctrine of inspiration questioned, on the strength of the assumed contradiction in the sentence where Matthew records (chap. v. 40), "If any man take

¹ See Whitby on Matt. v. 5. ² For examples, Matt. v. 13—39. All chapters vi. and vii. 6—16.

away thy coat (χιτῶνα), let him also have thy cloak" (ἱμάτιον); and where, according to St. Luke, he said (chap. vi. 29), "Him that taketh away thy cloak, forbid not to take thy coat also." Our answer to this is, that this diversity can no longer form a ground of objection, because the two sentences were spoken at different periods of time.

But we may add,—because the remark may also apply to several other objections of the same nature,—that, even if it were true, that the two sentences in question might be quoted as the same fragment of the same sermon, the difference between them would not cause us the slightest astonishment. We believe that the Holy Ghost, when quoting himself, is not restricted to the use of the same terms, provided that he preserves the same sense. When a man of accurate mind repeats or quotes his own writings, he does not in any wise feel compelled to preserve the identity of the phrase thus far. And we judge, in the case before us, that the mind of our Lord is *equally* expressed in these two sentences of Luke and Matthew. (See further what is said on this subject, chap. iii. sect. 2.)

ANOTHER SOURCE OF RASH CONCLUSION.—Attention has not always been paid to a *reading* of respectable critical authority, which would remove a difficulty; objectors having rather preferred to impute some contradiction to the sacred writer.

EXAMPLE.—According to the first three evangelists (Mark xv. 25, 33, 34; Matt. xxvii. 45, 46; Luke xxiii. 44, 45), our Saviour was crucified at

the *third hour* of the day, (that is, at nine o'clock A.M.); the sun was darkened at the sixth hour; and Jesus gave up the ghost at the ninth; while according to St. John, the crucifixion did not commence until the *sixth hour of the day*, that is, at noon.—“A palpable contradiction.”

Before replying to this difficulty, we would here offer a remark, precisely similar to that which we have already made on the subject of the taxing of Cyrenius:—Is it possible that the apostle John should be ignorant of the duration of his Master's suffering, and be mistaken three hours in six!—the disciple who stood before the cross?

But if we consult the Greek manuscripts of St. John, we find, of these, four in small, and three in uncial (capital) letters, (among others, the celebrated *Codex Bezae*, preserved at Cambridge,) which here read *the third hour*, instead of the sixth. The numeral terms, in the Greek manuscripts, are often noted in figures, that is, by simple Greek letters; and the numbers 3 and 6, being expressed, by two letters, which may very easily be confounded, (the *γάμμα* and the *ἐπίσημον*,) several among the ancients have thought that the variation had its origin in mistaking the one for the other. Griesbach, who has marked this reading with the sign of preference, cites Severus of Antioch, and Ammonius in Theophylactus; and adds that the Chronicle of Alexandria appeals, in favour of this reading, to the best copies, and even to the original *autograph* (*ἰδιοχέρον*) of the Gospel of St. John.

ANOTHER SOURCE OF RASH CONCLUSIONS.—The import of certain features in a narrative is not comprehended, and the conclusion is eagerly come to, that the author is in fault.

FIRST EXAMPLE.—Jesus, in St. Matthew, (xxiii. 35, 36,) denounces the Jews on account of their treatment of his saints, and threatens them with the most terrible judgments of God; “that (he remarks) upon this race (or generation, *γένεαν*) may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel, unto the blood of Zacharias, son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar.” There is certainly here (we are told) a grievous inadvertence; not, doubtless, on the part of Jesus Christ, but on the part of the evangelist who reports his words, and whose memory must have failed. We know, from the second book of Chronicles (xxiv. 21), that this Zacharias, who was stoned by the Jews in the holy place (*ἱερα*), was the son, not of Barachias, but of Jehoiada. This is, therefore, an evident error. It does not affect doctrine, and cannot, in the slightest degree, be a ground of disquietude to our faith; but it suffices to demonstrate that the *theopneustic* action could not have descended, as has been pretended, to the choice of expressions, or into the indifferent details of inspired narrations.

The answer is simple. We wish it were as easy to render it as short as it seems to us conclusive; we will give it at once, briefly. There is no reference here to the Zacharias of whom you speak;

the evangelist has not, therefore, erred in not naming him, since he had him not in his mind. In fact, do you not see the incompatibility of such a supposition with the thought of Jesus Christ? What has he in view?—to recall the long catalogue of homicides of which an account would be exacted from the race of the Jews. And whilst he takes up their first murder, before the flood, at the very portal of paradise, to make them responsible for it,—would you desire that he should be content to refer, for the last, to a crime committed more than eight centuries before he spoke? He commences at the son of Adam, and would you imagine that he could conclude with the son of Jehoiada, and thus hold the Jews innocent of the blood shed during 873 years, the most shameful period of their history? Would it not have been more rational to commence rather than to end with this Jehoiada? Were not the Jews far more responsible for their homicides, committed in their last nine centuries, than they could be for blood which was shed before the deluge? Had they not, for instance, pursued and killed, with fearful fury, the prophet Urijah? (Jer. xxiv. 23.) “Which of the prophets (demands Stephen) have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which predicted the coming of the Just One.” (Acts vii. 52.) There is, therefore, no reference to the son of Jehoiada in the passage of St. Matthew.

Our answer might terminate here; but it will doubtless be asked, who, then, was the Zacharias

of whom Jesus Christ spake? If we did not know this, it would not be a difficulty, and we might satisfy ourselves by replying:—It was a righteous man, whom the Jews slew, not only in *the court of the temple* (τοῦ ἱεροῦ) as the son of Jehoida; but “*between the temple* (τοῦ ναοῦ) and the altar;” and this righteous man was *the son of Barachias!* The point, nevertheless, may be carried farther; for history enumerates to us two or three others of the same name, sons of Barachias (Βαραχίου or Βαρδοχου), among whom the opinions of learned men are divided.

The first was “a man of understanding in the visions of God,” as he is represented in the second book of Chronicles,¹ and who, it is believed, is the person spoken of by Isaiah in his eighth chapter.² However, he lived too short a time after the son of Jehoida, for our objections against the one not to have equal weight against the other.

The second is the prophet Zechariah, son of Berechiah, and grandson of Iddo (Zech. i. 1), who came from Babylon with Zerubbabel, 325 years after the days of Jehoiada, and whose writings form the last book but one of the Old Testament. Scripture, it is true, has not recorded to us his martyrdom, any more than that of the other prophets, who were almost all persecuted and put to death.

The temple and the altar had just been rebuilt by his instrumentality, as by those of the prophet

¹ Chap. xxvi. 5. ² Hieron. in Isaiam, viii. 2, in the Septuagint Ζαχαρίαν υἱὸν Βαραχίου.

Haggai (Esdras, iv. 14, 15); and Zacharias, as it appears, was killed "between the temple and this altar." We read in the *Targum*, or the Chaldee Paraphrase of Jonathan Ben Uziel (who, it is believed, was contemporary with Jesus Christ),¹ the following passage, which proves to us that such was already, previously to the time of our Saviour, the tradition of the Jews concerning this prophet, who was indifferently called the son of Iddo and son of Barachias (Zech. i. 1; Esdras, v. 1 — vi. 14). The Paraphrast (Lam. ii. 20) introduces the "House of Judgment," answering to that lament of Jeremiah, "The priest and the prophet, have they not been slain in the temple of the Lord?" "Was it well of you to kill a prophet, as you did Zacharias, the son of Iddo, in the house of the sanctuary of the Eternal, because he endeavoured to reclaim you from your evil ways?"² It may, therefore, be seen that Jesus Christ might remind the Jews of the sacrilegious murder of this prophet, the son of Barachias, son of Iddo, with which the prophecy of the Old Testament was to close.

There is, however, another Zacharias, son of Barachias (or of Baruch, Βαρούχου) to whom the word of our Lord might be applied with still more probability. Flavius Josephus makes him known to us, in his inestimable "History of the Jewish Wars," which has already confirmed so many other prophecies of the New Testament. It is only three

¹ Prolegom. of Walton, 12.
xxiii. 35.

² Whitby's Commentary on Matthew,

years before the last desolation of Jerusalem, when there appears a Zacharias, son of Baruch, who is massacred by Jewish zealots *in the midst of the holy place* (ἐν μέσῳ τοῦ Ἱεροῦ),¹ and whose body was thrown into the valley beneath the walls of the mount of the temple. This was a righteous man, whom, according to Josephus, they hated for his virtues, influence, hostility to evil, and zeal for liberty.² Following that terrible night,—“which was,” says Josephus, “the real commencement of the destruction of Jerusalem,” and in which the zealots murdered the chief of the nation, the high-priest Ananias, and soon after, twelve thousand young men of the Israelitish nobility,—these infuriated men, affecting the formalities of justice, had dragged him before a tribunal of seventy judges, who all, however, had the courage to declare him innocent. Enraged at hearing his reproaches and manly defence, they fell upon and slew him, *in the midst of the holy place*. This (consider several commentators) was the last of the righteous whose blood would be required at the hands of that homicidal race. Abel was the first—Zacharias the last. On this account, Jesus Christ, in the style of the prophets, employing the past for the future, speaks of this crime as already consummated: “you slew him,” says he to them, “between the temple and the altar.”

The historian Josephus, it is true, only speaks of Zacharias as a just man, and not as a Christian, or

¹ Bell. Judæi. lib. iv. c. 19.

² παρώξυνε δὲ αὐτοὺς τὸ διατεῖν ἄνθρωπος μισοπονήρων καὶ φιλαλεύθερον.

a prophet; but, being a Jew, he could not use other language; and we see him elsewhere (Antiq. lib. xx. c. 8) only making mention of the apostle St. James (who, nevertheless, was also a prophet), as a good man, whom the high-priest Ananias caused to be stoned, to the great displeasure of all right-minded people,¹ during the interregnum which succeeded the sudden death of the governor, Festus. Neither has it appeared to us that the difference in the terminations of the names *Barachias* and *Baruch* suffices to destroy the argument which results from etymological and radical resemblance. We see, in fact, in the New Testament, how much it was the custom among the Jews, Hebrews, or Hellenists, to change the terminations of proper names. (Silas and Silvanus,² Prisca and Priscilla,³ Lucas and Lucius.⁴) However this may be, we once more conclude that this passage cannot have reference to the son of Jehoiada, and we leave the reader to decide which of the two personages whom we have indicated, was in the mind of Jesus Christ.

SECOND EXAMPLE.—Mark xi. 11—14. *Jesus curses a fig-tree, which had nothing but leaves; for it was not the season of figs.*

Here (it is said) is, unquestionably, some error. Why look for fruit out of the season when it might reasonably be expected?

There is, however, in this nothing but what is

¹ Ἐπικράτατων. ² 2 Cor. i. 19; 1 Thess. i. 1; Acts xv. 22, 34, 40; xvi. 25; xvii. 15. ³ 2 Tim. iv. 19; Rom. xvi. 3; Acts xviii. 2, 26. ⁴ Acts. xiii. 1; Rom. xvi. 21; Philem. 24.

very strange. If I had seen the season at which they were gathered, this tree might have been found stripped if it had been the hands of man; and its barrenness in this case would not have been strange.

But it is further inquired, and we notice it in passing. Is a tree condemned for not producing fruit? Why condemn it? We answer that, in this miracle, which is a type, the tree is not more unfortunate than guilty. What is suffering is not more real than its moral responsibility. The one is symbolical as well as the other.

ANOTHER SOURCE OF FALSE CONCLUSIONS.—This rule has not been sufficiently kept in view, (which we feel pressure in setting before our readers in the words of the great reformer of Italy, the excellent Peter Martyr :—

* Although some passages may appear obscure, as respects chronology, we must be very careful of recounting them by imputing faults to the inspired book. On this account, if it sometime happen that we cannot clearly make out the number of years, we should simply confess our ignorance, and consider that the Scriptures express themselves with so much conciseness, that it is not always possible for us to discover at what period such or such a computation should be commenced. It often occurs, that, in the history of the kings of Judah and of Israel, the respective number of their years is

¹ Transcribed from his Commentary on 2 Kings viii. 17, and 1 Kings xv. 1.

not easily reconciled ; but these difficulties are explained and adjusted in various ways :—1. The same year, commenced by one of the two, and ended by the other, is attributed to both.—2. The sons often reigned with their fathers, during a few years, which are imputed sometimes to the one and sometimes to the other.—3. There were often interregnums, which Scripture sometimes annexes to the reign of the predecessor, and sometimes to the successor.—4. Finally, it sometimes happens, that certain years in which oppressive and profane princes have reigned, are looked upon as void, and are not, therefore, reckoned.”

We conceive that the examples which we have already cited will suffice, and that we need not multiply their number. What we have said, fairly indicates the weight which is due, generally, to the difficulties which are advanced ;¹ for we have been careful to review those of them which have been characterised as the most serious. Warned by these examples, and by many others, let us learn, when henceforth we meet with any difficulty of the same nature, to think as did, sixteen hundred years ago, Julius Africanus, the friend of Origen, and as have done all the men of God who have lived before and after him :—“ However it may be—(said he, in reference to the two genealogies of Jesus Christ which he had reconciled), — however it

¹ See, for further details, the authors whom we have quoted, and in particular, the useful collection by Horne (*Introduction to the Critical Study of the Bible.*)

they are assumed by the Church. It is not every
part of Scripture which is equally deserving of
veneration.

SECT. VII.—*Errors touching the Philosophy of Nature.*

IT MUST BE REMEMBERED, we are sometimes told,
that though the accuracy of the calculations
which are traced in the Greek chronicles, and nar-
ratives of Scripture, are susceptible of removal by
the resources of an extraordinary genius, more or less
searching and accurate—the fact that there are others
which cannot be rectified. These are, all those
expressions in which the sacred writers present
themselves in realities according to the now better
known laws of nature. Nevertheless (add they) if
this argument is conclusive against the verbal in-
spiration of the Scriptures, it in no respect com-
promises the divinity of their doctrines, any more
than the truth of the important religious facts
which they record for us. In inspiring his apostles
and prophets, God's design was not to make us
learned men, but saints. He could, therefore, with-
out danger, leave the sacred writers to speak with
ignorance of the phenomena of the material world;
their prepossessions on such matters were innocent,
while incontestible. Do you not often find them
expressing themselves as though the earth were
immovable, and the sun in motion? "His going

¹ Euseb. Eccles. Hist. Book I. ch. vii.

forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it." (Psalm xix. 6.) The moon and stars are equally in motion. The sun, at the command of Joshua, stood still over Gibeon in the midst of the heavens, and the moon over the valley of Ajalon, (Josh. x. 12.) The earth is "founded upon the seas," (Psalm xxiv. 5;) "standing out of the water and in the water," (2 Peter iii. 5;) God has "laid its foundations, that it should not be removed for ever," (Psalm civ. 5.) Can you admit that this is really the language of the Creator of heaven and earth speaking to his creature?

We proceed to reply to this objection, which we rejoice to meet with on our way, because its examination can have no other issue than the glory of the Scriptures.

We would fully admit, that if any physical errors could be proved to exist in sacred writ, it would not be a book from God; but we will demonstrate that it contains no such errors; and we venture to defy our adversaries to cite one from the entire Bible. We will even go much farther, and show, on the contrary, how large a store of science is latent in the very simplicity of its language.

We will commence by saying a few words on the miracle of Joshua, because it has often been employed against either the plenary inspiration, or, at any rate, the divine mission of the men of God. We have read the productions of many infidels, who

have attacked it with their ordinary arrogance, and with the painful raillery which too often characterises them. But it is easy to answer them. We do not intend to discuss here the means by which this miracle was accomplished; but we desire to show, by this example, the frivolity with which men, when they have failed to discover the meaning of certain passages, have hastened to pronounce them to be inconsistent with reason.

It stands recorded in the tenth chapter of the book of Joshua, that, on the day of the battle of Beth-horon, "*the sun stood still in the midst of heaven;*" and that "*there was no day like that before it, or after it.*"

In Germany it has been said:—"This sentence, taken in its natural sense, appears to us absurd; therefore it is erroneous and wholly human." Elsewhere it has been said:—"It is absurd; therefore we must give it another sense." But both have come to a conclusion upon false premises. The fact is something less than absurd—it is simply miraculous.

We will, however, quote the objection in the words of a theological professor.¹ "The most hardy religionist (says he) would be constrained to acknowledge, that, in the system of our globe, if the sun were to stop but one moment, or if the movement of the earth were to slacken, warring

¹ On the Use of Reason in Matters of Faith. Theological Essays of M. Chenevière, vol. i. p. 456.

armies, and all else on the surface of the earth, would be swept away like chaff before the tempest. It is an expression which cannot be taken literally." The adversaries of inspiration refer to this for another object. The sacred historian, say they, did not know the laws of nature ; and cannot, therefore, be inspired.

Nevertheless, it is the objection itself which is an error. Thus, if the miracle, instead of abruptly and instantaneously arresting the rotatory motion of our globe, occupied only the short interval of a few seconds to accomplish it, by an easy and continuous action, then have we enough even in this feeble circumstance to assure us, that such a phenomenon could have, mechanically, no other very sensible effect, than that of causing the waters upon the earth's surface to flow from west to east. A child can tell us, that when a rapidly moving carriage comes in contact with any obstacle which at once arrests its progress, an accident must take place, the passengers being thrown off to a distance ; and this, because the obstacle it has encountered was fixed and immovable. But let its progress be stayed by a continuous resistance, acting in a successive manner, for the space of a few seconds, then even little children will be able to keep their seats, without even being sensible of the impulsion which a minute before had been communicated to them by the rapid pace of the horses, and which, but for this precaution, would have precipitated them headlong.

The rotation of the earth, at the equator, is 1426 feet, and at Jerusalem, 1212 feet per second. This is the initial velocity of a cannon-ball, projected by a charge of powder equal to one-fifth its own weight. This is capable, (after allowing for the resistance of air,) of carrying the ball to the amazing height of 24,000 feet; and yet a child of six years old might, in *two-thirds of a minute*, defeat this prodigious power by the easy and continued action of its fingers. Place between its little hands an eight-pound cannon-ball for two-thirds of a minute, and during the same interval, let one exactly similar fall freely, as through the air, from the height of the highest Himalayan mountain. After the lapse of only forty seconds, the weight, after having acted *by the same impulsion* upon both these projectiles, will only, with regard to the first, have had the effect of fatiguing the feeble hands which held it; whilst, on the other, it will have acquired a velocity equal to that of the rotation of the earth, communicated to the armies upon the hill of Beth-horon.

Since, then, a child may destroy, by the continued efforts of its little hands, a force capable (if it were concentrated in a single instant), of discharging a cannon-ball to the summit of Chimboroga, it is easy to understand that if God, in the day of the battle of Beth-horon, had employed two-thirds of a minute to arrest, by brief and successive retardations, the rotation of our globe, then the projective impulsions which a body of eight

pounds of iron would continually receive during these forty seconds, would not even have been sufficiently powerful to prevent their counteraction by the feeble hands of a child, and this without a greater exertion of strength than was requisite for it to hold a weight of eight pounds during the same interval of time; and if the metal, instead of being in the form of a ball, had that of a quoit or cube, it would not be sufficiently affected to overcome the resistance of friction, or to move it on the surface of the earth.

It will, perhaps, here be objected that the rotation of the earth at Beth-horon is twenty-seven times more rapid than that of a steam-carriage on a rail-road. It is true;—but since the force of retardation necessary to overcome a given impulsion, is in inverse proportion to the time it occupies, the miracle would be accomplished in eighteen minutes. Let us suppose, then, eighteen minutes, instead of forty seconds, to completely arrest the movement of the earth, at the voice of Joshua; and then “the warring armies, instead of being swept as chaff before the tempest,” would no more feel what was going on, than do, at present, thousands of rail-road travellers, when stopping at the assigned stations.¹

Other difficulties, of the same character, have been advanced respecting this miracle of Joshua.

¹ For further observations on the miracle in question, we would refer the reader to some remarkable historical and geological considerations in *Chaubard's Elements of Geology*.

If the earth, it has been remarked, had suspended its movement during ten hours, the power of the sun's attraction, acting unconnectedly upon it, would at once have caused it to fall nine hundred leagues in the direction of its powerful focus, and the annual conditions of our orbit would thus have been sensibly deranged.

This objection has no more reality than the preceding one. The miracle, in fact, does not involve the slightest disturbance of the earth's progressive motion, but merely of its rotation : for according to the laws of celestial mechanism, the rotation of a planet on its axis is entirely independent of the movement which is imposed upon its centre of gravity, and which impels it in its elliptical course. Experience had attested this, previously to its demonstration by astronomical science. It had long been observed, that the velocity of the sun (or rather of the earth) in its orbit, unceasingly varied from one end of the year to the other ; and notwithstanding this, there exists not in nature a movement more uniform than that which, to our eyes, causes the whole celestial sphere to revolve. Observations upon the motion of the moon have proved that for upwards of two thousand years, the sidereal day has not even varied the hundredth part of a minute.

Let us suppose a double concussion communicated to the earth, above and below its centre, in two opposite and parallel directions ; and it will be explained how rotation on its axis may have been

suspended, without its progressive motion being at all affected. But I pause. It would be rash, I will say it would be puerile, to pretend to enter into the details of the prodigy, in order to account for the causes of it: and I have been desirous only to exhibit the vanity of objections. The truth, which they do not tell, is, that they find the miracle too great for its object. But for men who believe in the great miracle of redemption by the Son of God, nothing is too great; all proceeds in just proportions in the divine revelations. Moreover, and I hasten to avow it, it would not even be necessary for me to account for this prodigy, by assuming so absolute an act of Almighty power, as the suspension of the revolution of our globe. To effect it, God may have employed only one of those numerous causes which divert light from its course, and produce the countless illusions of optical science; some of those refractions, for instance, which daily give new aspects, in various ways, to all the stars of the celestial hemisphere. Is it not known, that, in the polar regions, the power of horizontal refraction causes the sun to appear to the inhabitants of those bleak countries, ten days before it is really above their horizon? Such might have been the cause of the miracle of Beth-horon. We decide nothing,—we do not even suppose any thing. We would only say, that the miracle was duly consummated, (whatever were the means by which it was produced,) since, to the eyes of the inhabitants of Palestine, *the sun*

stood still in Gibeon, and the moon in the valley of Ajalon.

The Scriptures are, however, reproached with using language about the daily phenomena of nature, which seems to indicate ignorance, and which is incompatible with a plenary inspiration. According to the writers of the Bible, the sun rises, sets, and even stops, in its course, whilst the earth remains fixed! We would that the Creator, in speaking to us in a book inspired by himself, should have more clearly shown us, that the Spirit by which the sacred historians have spoken, knew, before ourselves, the rotation of our globe, its periodical revolution, and the relative immobility of the sun!

Let us, then, examine this reproach. We will, in the first place, ask those who give it utterance, whether they desire that the Bible should speak as did Sir Isaac Newton. Would they forget that, if God were to express himself about the scenes of nature,—I will not say, according to their appearance in his sight, but according to what they may appear to the learned of future generations,—the great Newton himself would then have comprehended nothing? Moreover, the language even of those most advanced in science, is now, and ever will be, after all, but the language of appearances. The visible world is, to an extent far exceeding our conception, a figure which passeth away,—a scene of illusions and of shadows. What you call reality, is only in itself an appearance relative to a more

exalted reality, and to a more extended analysis. From our mortal lips, the word *reality* bespeaks nothing absolute; it is entirely a relative term, employed only to express the altitude we think we have gained in the exalted scale of our own conceits. The human eye sees objects only under two dimensions, and pictures them together upon one flat surface, until the operation of touching, and some experience, have given them the reality of depth, or a third dimension. Colours belong not to objects, but exist only by reflection and illusion in the object which presents them. The very hardness of their body, their solidity and extent, are no other than an *appearance*, and which presents itself to us as a reality only, until a further acquaintance with science supplies another. Who can say where this analysis should stop, and what would be our language respecting beings with which we are the most familiar if we were but endowed with one more sense—say, of *antennæ* (feelers), like ants and bees? The expression of appearances, provided it is exact, is, therefore, among men, a language philosophically correct; and it is that which the Scriptures should adopt. Is it desirable that the Bible should speak to us, concerning the scenes of nature, in a manner different to that in which we speak to each other in our social or domestic relations?—otherwise, even, than two of the most enlightened men would converse? When Sir John Herschel gave directions to his servants that they should call him exactly at midnight, to

observe the passage of some star in its lunar meridian, would he feel himself obliged to speak to them of the earth, of its rotation, and of the moment when it shall have returned to their *nadir* in the course of its revolution? Surely not; and had you heard him converse, even in the Observatory at Greenwich, with the learned Airey, you would have found, that, even in the sanctuary of science, the habitual language of these astronomers is still in close resemblance to that of the Scriptures. With them, the stars rise, the equinoxes recede, the planets revolve, accelerate, stop, and retrograde, in their courses. Would you, then, wish that Moses had spoken to all generations of men a more scientific language than that of La Place or Arago?

But there is far more than this. We would here bring into view two striking facts, which burn with vivid lustre as soon as they are examined, and which at once discover, in the Scriptures, the pen of the Omnipotent God. Here, as every where else, the objections, when closely examined, become arguments, and turn upon those who originate them, to the triumph of truth.

These two facts are analogous to what may be observed in the language of a learned astronomer conversing with his children of tender years, and pointing out to them, with his finger, the heavens and the earth. If you follow him in this intercourse, in which his tenderness, stooping to their level, presents to their opening intelligence images and words which they can understand, you will soon be struck

with his respect for truth, in two ways :—First, he will never tell them any thing but what is true ; and secondly, there will be in his language very manifest indications that he knows more than he wishes to impart to them. He would, undoubtedly, not pretend to instruct them in science ; but, on the one hand, nothing in his communications would contradict its principles ; and, on the other, much of what he said would show that, what he was silent about, he yet thoroughly understood. At a later period of time, when his children, having attained to manhood, would reconsider his instruction, not only would they find it exempt from all error, but they would moreover recognise, that by its wise adaptation to their capacity, it was already in a pre-established harmony with science, and that its germ had been presented to their unconsciousness. In proportion as their own mental powers unfolded, they would with admiration discover under the reserve and simplicity of his language, much concealed wisdom, learned and accurate observations, turns of phrase, and expressions which harmonized with facts, to them at the time unknown, but with which he had himself long been familiar.

Well, such is also the double character which every attentive reader may discern in the language of the Scriptures. They speak in poetry, but with precision,—the true language of appearances. We there hear a Father who addresses himself to the youngest of his children ; but in such a manner that the eldest of them can never find a single sentence

contrary to the true condition of the things which he has created; and in such a manner, also, that he frequently, and unconstrainedly, as it were, suffers expressions to escape him, which shall show them that what they have learned of his works during four thousand years, he knew before them, and better than they. Thus it is, that in the Bible Eternal Wisdom addresses itself to its children. In proportion as they advance to riper years, they find the Scripture suited to their age, adapted to their mental development, appearing to grow with their growth, and always exhibiting to them the two facts which we have dwelt upon:—on the one hand, the absence of all error; and, on the other, indirect, but incontestable indications, of a science which has preceded all that man ever possessed.

First fact.—There is no physical error in the word of God.

If there were, as we have already said, the Bible could not be from God. “God is not man, that he should lie;” nor a son of man, that he should be mistaken. He must, undoubtedly, stoop even to our weakness, to be understood by us; but without, however, in any degree participating in it. His language always testifies of his condescension, but never of his ignorance.

This remark is more important than it appears to be before it has been reflected on. It becomes very forcible on a close examination.

Examine all the false theologies of both ancients and moderns; read in Homer or Hesiod the re-

ligious code of the Greeks ; examine that of Budhists, Brahmins, or Mahomedans, and you will there find not only revolting systems, as respects the Divinity, but the grossest errors relative to the natural world. Their theology would, doubtless, shock ; but their natural philosophy and astronomy, also, always associated with their religion, involve notions the most absurd.

Read in the Chou-king and the Y-king of the Chinese, their fantastic theories about the five elements (wood, fire, earth, metal, and water), and of their powerful influences upon affairs both human and divine.¹ Read in the Shaster, the Pouran, the four books of Vedham (the Hindoo laws), their offensive system of the foundation of the world. The moon is 50,000 leagues higher than the sun ; her light is inherent ; she animates our bodies. The night is caused by the descent of the sun behind the Someyra Mountain, situated in the midst of the earth, of several thousand leagues in height ! Our globe is flat and triangular, composed of seven stories, each of which has its degree of beauty, its inhabitants, and its sea ; the first of honey, another of sugar, another of butter, another of wine, and finally, the whole mass is sustained upon the heads of innumerable elephants, who, when they shake themselves, cause the earthquakes ! In a word, they have given the history of their gods alike in the most fantastic and fatal connexion with the physical

¹ Pauthier. *Les Livres Sacrés de l'Orient*, (Paris, 1840,) pp. 15, 89, 94, 146, &c.

world and with all the phenomena of the universe : so that the missionaries in India have often declared, that a telescope introduced by stealth into the sacred Benares, or the ancient Ava, would be a battery, powerful as a thunder-bolt, to overturn the systems of both Brahmin and Budhist.

Read, further, the philosophy of Grecian and Roman antiquity. What sentences do you not find there, one of which would alone suffice to compromise all our doctrines of inspiration, if it were met with in any book of the sacred Scripture. Read Mahomet's Koran, creating the mountains "to prevent the earth from moving, and to hold it as by anchors and cables!" What do I say?—read even the descriptions of Buffon, or some of the sarcasms of Voltaire, on the subject of a deluge, or on the fossil animals of the primitive world. We will come still nearer: read, moreover, we will not say the absurd reasonings of heathens,—of Lucretia, Pliny, and Plutarch, against the theory of the antipodes,—but of the Fathers themselves of the christian church. Hear the theological indignation of St. Augustine, who declares that the rotundity of the earth is opposed to the Scriptures; and the scientific eloquence of Lactantius, who believes it to be contrary to sound sense: "*Nùm aliquid loquuntur!*" he exclaims; "is there any one so ignorant as to believe that there are men having legs above their heads; trees having fruit hanging upwards; and hail, rain, and snow, falling from below upwards?" They answer (he adds) by affirming that the earth is a globe.

" Quid dicam de iis nescio, qui, cùm semel aberraverint, constanter in stultitiâ perseverant, et vanis vana defendunt !" " One knows not what to say of such men, who, once astray, plunge headlong in their folly, and defend one absurdity by another !"¹

Hear, yet, the legate Boniface, on this account, accusing Virgilius as a heretic, to the pope; hear Pope Zacharius treating this unfortunate bishop as *homo malignus*. " If it be proved (he writes) that Virgilius maintains that there are other men under this earth, assemble a council, condemn him, depose him from the priesthood, and expel him from the church!" Hear, at a later period, all the higher order of the clergy in Spain, and especially the grave and authoritative council of Salamanca, in its indignation against the geographical system by which Columbus sought a new world. Hear, at the period of the birth of Newton, the renowned Galileo,— " who (says Kepler) scaled the highest walls of the universe," and who justified, by his genius as well as by his telescope, the forgotten and condemned system of Copernicus; behold him groaning at the age of eighty in the dungeons of Rome, for having discovered the earth's motion, after having been compelled, ten years previously, (the 28th of June, 1633,) to pronounce the following words before their Eminences, at the palace of the Holy Office :— " I, Galileo, in the seventieth year of my life, on my knees before your Eminences, having before my eyes, and touching with my own hands, the holy

¹ On False Knowledge, book iii. chap. 24.

Scriptures, I abjure, curse, and abhor the error of the earth's motion !”

What might not have been justly said against the Scriptures, if they had spoken of the phenomena of nature, as all the ancient sages have spoken of them ? If they had resolved everything to four elements, as was done for so long a period ;—if they, like Philolaüs of Crotona, had made the stars crystal bodies ; and if, like Empedocles, they had lighted with two suns the two hemispheres of our globe ?—If they had said, with Leucippus, that the fixed stars, kindled by the velocity of their diurnal rotation about the earth, illumined the sun with their fires ?—If they had formed the heavens and earth, like Diodorus of Sicily, and all the sages of Egypt, by the motion of air and the upward course of flame ;—or if they had said, like Philolaüs, that the sun has only a borrowed light, and that it is merely a mirror which reflects the splendour of the celestial spheres ?—If, like Anaxagoras, they had made of this luminary a mass of iron larger than the Peloponnesus, and of the earth a mountain, whose foundations extended to infinity ?—If they had imagined the heaven a solid sphere, studded with fixed stars, as did Aristotle, and almost all the ancients ?—If they had termed the celestial vault a *firmamentum*, or στεφένωμα, as have done its interpreters both Greek and Latin ?—And, finally, if they had spoken, as has been done so recently, and even amongst christian nations, of the influence of the movements of the heavens upon the elements of this lower world,

upon the characters of men, and upon the course of human things? Such is the natural inclination of all nations towards this superstition, that, in despite of their religion, the ancient Jews, and even Christians themselves, equally sank into it. "The modern Greeks," says D'Alembert,¹ "have carried it to excess; there is scarcely found one of their authors who, on every occasion, does not speak of predictions by the stars, of casting nativities, and talismanic influences; so that there was scarcely an edifice at Constantinople, and in all Greece, which was not erected according to the rules of a *planet-directed divination*." French historians observe that astrology was so much in vogue in the time of Catherine de Medicis, that nothing important was undertaken without having consulted the stars; and even under Henry III. and Henry IV. the only topic at the court of France was the predictions of the astrologers. "The end of the last century," says Ph. Giuliani,² "witnessed an Italian sending to Pope Innocent XI. an astrological prediction respecting Vienna, then besieged by the Turks, which was very favourably received. In our own time, the Count de Boulainvilliers has written very gravely on the subject.

But now, open the Bible, examine the fifty sacred authors therein, from the admirable Moses,—who wrote in the wilderness four hundred years before the siege of Troy,—to the fisherman son of Zebedee,

¹ Ency. or Explan. Dict. of the Sciences, &c. vol. i. p. 663. (Lucca, 758.) ² Ibid. p. 664.

who wrote fifteen hundred years later in Ephesus and Patmos, under the reign of Domitian ;—open the Bible, and see if you can find anything similar there. You cannot. None of those mistakes which the science of every century detects in the books of preceding generations,—none of those absurdities which modern astronomy, especially, so numerous brings to light in the writings of the ancients, in their sacred codes, in their philosophy, and even in the most attractive pages of the Fathers of the church,—not one of these errors can be found in our sacred books ; nothing there will contradict anything that the investigations of the learned world, during so many centuries, have been able to disclose, both as to the nature of our globe and of ethereal elements. Carefully go through our Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, in search of such faults, and as you carry on the investigation, remember that it is a book which treats of every thing, which describes nature, which recounts its wonders, which records its creation, which tells us of the formation of the heavens, of the light, of the waters, of the air, of mountains, of animals, and of plants ;—that it is a book which acquaints us with the first revolutions of the world, and which foretells also its last ;—that it is a book which describes them with circumstantial details, invests them with sublime poetry, and chants them in fervent melodies ;—that it is a book replete with eastern imagery, full of majesty, variety, and boldness ;—that it is a book which treats of the earth and things visible, and, at

the same time, of the celestial world and things invisible;—that it is a book in which nearly fifty writers, of every degree of cultivation, of every order, of every condition, and separated from one another by fifteen hundred years, have been engaged;—that it is a book written variously in the centre of Asia; in the sands of Arabia; in the deserts of Judea; in the porches of the Jewish temple, or in the rustic schools of the prophets of Bethel and Jericho; in the magnificent palaces of Babylon, and on the idolatrous banks of the Chebar: and afterwards in the centre of western civilization; in the midst of the Jews and their ignorant conceits; among polytheism and its idols, and, as it were, in the bosom of pantheism and its foolish philosophy;—that it is a book whose first writer was, during forty years, brought up among the magicians of Egypt, who regarded the sun, planets, and elements, as endowed with intelligence, reacting upon and governing our world by their continual evaporation;—that it is a book whose first pages preceded by more than NINE HUNDRED YEARS the most ancient philosophers of Greece and Asia; Thales, Pythagoras, Zaleucus, Xenophon, and Confucius;—that it is a book which carries its records into the scenes of the invisible world, the hierarchy of angels, the latest periods of futurity, and the glorious consummation of all things! Well; search in its 50 authors, search in its 66 books, search in its 1,189 chapters, and its 31,173 verses; search for a single one of the thousand errors with which every ancient

and modern author abounds, when they speak of heaven or of the earth, of their revolutions or their elements, and you will fail to find it.

Its language is unconstrained, and without reserve; it speaks of every thing, and in every form of words; it is the prototype, it is the inimitable model; it has inspired all that poetry has produced in its most elevated character. Ask Milton, the two Racines, or Young, and Klopstock: they will tell you that its divine strains are by far the most harmonious, commanding, and sublime; it rides upon a cherub, and walks upon the wings of the wind! And yet this book never does violence to facts, nor to the principles of sound natural philosophy. Never, in one single sentence, will you find it in opposition to the just ideas which science has given us, regarding the form of our globe, its magnitude, and its geology; or respecting the void and vast expanse; or the inert and obedient materiality of all the stars; or the planets, their masses, courses, dimensions, and influences; or the suns which people the depths of space, their number, nature, and immensity. In like manner, in speaking of the invisible world, and on the new, unknown, and difficult subject of angels, this book will not exhibit even one of its authors who, in the course of the 1,560 years which have been occupied in producing it, has varied in the character of love, humility, fervour, and purity, which belongs to these mysterious beings. In like manner, also, in speaking of the relations of the celestial world with God, never has

one of these fifty writers, either in the Old or New Testament, advanced a single word favourable to the continued pantheism which has characterised the philosophy of the Gentiles. So, also, you will not find one of the authors of the Bible who, in speaking of the visible world, has suffered the escape of a single sentence like those which, in other books, so often contradict the reality of facts ;—not one which makes the heavens a firmament, as does the LXX., St. Jerome, and all the fathers of the church ;—not one, who, like Plato, makes the world an intelligent being ;—not one which reduces all earthly things to the four physical elements of the ancients ;—not one agreeing with the Jews, with the Latins, with the Greeks, with the noblest minds of antiquity, with the great Tacitus among the ancients, and the celebrated De Thou among the moderns, and with the sceptic Michael Montaigne, who writes, “The stars have dominion and power, not only upon our lives and the state of our fortunes, but even upon our inclinations, speech, and will ; and they rule, impel, and excite them at the pleasure of their influences ; and even as our reason informs us and discovers—all this lower world is affected by the least jarring in the celestial movements. *Facta etenim et vitas hominum suspendit ab astris ;*”¹—not one who has spoken of the mountains like Mahomet, of the system of creation like Buffon, of the antipodes like Lucretius, Plutarch, Pliny, Lactantius, St. Augustine, and Pope Zacharius. Truly, if there

¹ Essays, book ii. ch. 12.

could be found in the Bible even one of the errors which abound in both ancient and modern philosophy, our faith in the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures must be more than abandoned—it must then be acknowledged that there are mistakes in the word of God, and that such false sentences belong to a fallible writer, and not to the Holy Ghost; for God is not a man, that he should lie; there is in him no variableness, neither shadow of error; and He to whom lying lips are an abomination, cannot have contradicted himself, nor uttered what is untrue.

There is, therefore, no physical error whatever in the Scriptures; and this transcendent fact, which becomes more admirable in proportion as it is made the subject of closer investigation, is a striking proof of the inspiration which dictated them, even to their least expressions.

But again,—and here we present the *Second fact*.

Not only has the Bible not admitted a false sentence or expression, but it has allowed the insertion of words which enable us to discern, beyond the possibility of misapprehension, the knowledge of the Almighty God. His great aim, without doubt, was to reveal to us the eternal glories of the invisible world: not the barren secrets of that which is about to perish. Nevertheless, it often happens that an attentive ear discovers in his language, a science which he seeks not to teach; but of which He, *whose judgments are a great deep*, cannot be ignorant. Not only does not the Bible never tell

us, even passingly, anything false, but you will often discover words which betray the voice of the Creator of the world. Continually you will recognise a wisdom, a foreknowledge, and an exactness, which former ages could not question; but which only the discoveries of the telescope, mathematics, and science, have enabled the moderns to appreciate; so that its language bears, in these features, the indelible characters of the fullest inspiration. The wisdom and choiceness of its expressions,—the nature of certain accounts, whose perfect propriety and divine accordance with the facts, were not revealed until three thousand years afterwards,—the reserve of its language, sometimes its very boldness, and its unusual character for the times in which it was written—all these signs bespeak the Wise One, the Ancient of Days, who undoubtedly addresses his children, but who speaks like the father of the family, and who well knows all his household.

When the Scriptures speak of the form of our earth, they term it a GLOBE.¹ When they speak of the position of the globe in the midst of the universe, it is SUSPENDED UPON NOTHING,² (זל בלימה). When they speak of its age, not only do they put its creation, as well as that of the heavens, AT THE BEGINNING, that is to say, before ages which they cannot, or desire not, to number; but they are careful to place before the arranging of chaos, and

¹ Isaiah xl. 22. Job xxvi. 10. Prov. viii. 27. ² Job xxvi. 7.
 χρεμαζῶν γῆν ἐπὶ οὐδένος, says the LXX.

the creation of man, that of angels, archangels, principalities and powers, their trial, the fall and ruin of some, and the perseverance and glory of others.¹—When, afterwards, they speak of the origin of our continents, and of the later creation of plants, animals, and men, they then give to this new world and to our proud race so recent an existence, that in every age, and among all nations, and even in our modern schools, there have been those who have daringly rebelled against it; but, nevertheless, an age to which the learned and the vulgar have been compelled alike to yield, since the labours of De Luc, Cuvier, and Buckland, have so fully demonstrated that the state of the earth's surface, as well as the monuments of history and of science, incontestably authenticate it.—When they speak of the heavens, they employ to designate and define them, the most sublime and philosophical expressions; expressions which the Greeks in the Septuagint, the Latins in the Vulgate, and all the Fathers of the church in their sermons, have pretended to improve, but which they have distorted, because they appeared to them opposed to the science of their times. The heavens, in the Bible are *the expanse, expansum*,² רָקִיעַ; it is the void, the ether, or boundless space, and not the *firmamentum* of St. Jerome; nor the στερέωμα of the Alexandrian interpreters; nor the firm, solid crystalline,

¹ Nehem. ix. 6. Col. i. 16. Dan. vii. 10, compare with Jude 6. Gen. iii. 1, 13, 15. Rev. xx. 2; xii. 9, 12. Gen. iii. 24. John viii. 44. 2 Pet. ii. 4, 9, 10. John xii. 3. ² Gen. i. 6. Psalm xix. i.

and incorruptible *eighth heaven*, of Aristotle, and all the ancients. And, although this remarkable Hebrew term occurs seventeen times in the Old Testament, and although the LXX. uniformly renders it by στερέωμα (*firmament*), the New Testament Scripture has never once used it in the sense employed by the Greek interpreters.¹—When they speak of light, it is presented as an element, independent of the sun, and as anterior by three distinct periods to that in which this glorious luminary was lighted up :² anticipating thus the systems of moderns, which lead us to suppose with the great Newton, that the universe contains an ether, perfectly subtle, highly elastic, existing every where, whose contractions and dilatations produce not only the varied phenomena of light, but those even of gravitation.—When they speak of the creation of plants, they exhibit them vegetating, increasing and bearing seed before the appearance of the sun, and under conditions of light, heat, and moisture, which differ much from those which sustain vegetation in the present day ;³ and it is thus that they reveal, many thousand years since, an order of things, which fossil botany has, in later times, established as incontestable, the necessity of which is attested by the gigantic vegetable remains which have recently been discovered in Canada and Baffin's Bay: some, like M. Marcel de Serres,⁴ to explain this,

¹ The New Testament Scripture has employed it once, but to designate something very different to the heavens. ² Gen. i. 4, 14.

³ Gen. i. 12.

⁴ Memoirs of Marcel de Serres.

having recourse to a terrestrial magnetism, at that period more intense, or to a more luminous aurora borealis; others, like M. de Candolle,¹ to a great inclination of the ecliptic, although, in reality, (according to the celebrated theorem of La Grange,) the celestial mechanism restricts this variation of the planetary orbs within very narrow limits.²—When the Scriptures speak of air, whose gravity was unknown before Galileo, they tell us that God giveth to the air its WEIGHT, (משקל,) and to the seas their measure.³—When they speak of our atmosphere, and of “the waters which are above,”⁴ an importance is assigned to them which modern science alone could establish;⁵ since, according to its calculations, the force which nature annually employs, in the formation of clouds, is equal to a work which the whole human race could not accomplish in less than two hundred thousand years.⁶—And when they separate the waters which are beneath from those which are above, it is by *an expanse*, and not by a solid sphere, as both Greek and Latin translators have sought to show.—When they speak of the mountains, they discriminate two classes of facts; they speak of them as *created*, and as *rising*, and as *melting* like wax; they speak of the sinking of the valleys; in a word, they speak of them as a geological poet would speak in our day: “The mountains ascend, O Lord! and the valleys descend to

¹ *Bibliothèque Universelle*, lviii. 1835.

² The oscillations of the ecliptic, on all sides of its mean position, cannot exceed $1\frac{1}{3}^{\circ}$.

³ Job xxviii. 25.

⁴ Gen. i. 7.

⁵ See Leslie's Calculations.

⁶ Annual Publication of the Board of Longitude, 1835, p. 196.

the place which thou hast appointed for them."¹—When they speak of the human race, of every tribe, colour, and language, they give them one sole origin; and although the philosophy of every age has determinedly revolted against this truth, moderns have, at length, been constrained to acknowledge it.²—When they speak of the internal state of our globe, they declare two great facts of which learned men were long ignorant, but which have been rendered incontestable by their late discoveries; one relative to its solid crust; and the other, to the abyss of waters which it encloses.—When they speak of its solid covering, they inform us, that if its surface yields us bread, yet beneath (תחתיה), the earth is ON FIRE;³ that moreover "it is reserved for the fire," and that, at the last day, "the earth, and the works that are therein, shall be burned up;"⁴—And when they speak of the waters which our globe contains, they render the sole explanation, at least in this relation, of the immense overflowings under which (upon the evidence of scientific men themselves) it has, at various periods, been long and completely submerged. And whilst these men tell us of the little depth of the sea, and affirm that an uprising of only two hundred yards, or half as high again as the tower of Strasburg, would suffice to dissipate

¹ Psalm civ. 6—9. (marginal reading.) Gen. ii 14; viii. 4. Psalm xc. 2. Prov. viii. 25. Psalm xcvii. 5; cxliv. 5. Zech. iv. 4, 8. Ezek. xlvii. ² See *Sumner's Records of the Creation*, vol. i. p. 286; Professor Zimmermann's *Geographical History of Man*; and Wiseman's third *Treatise on the Natural History of the Human Race*, vol. i. p. 149. ³ Job, xxviii. Literally rendered. ⁴ 2 Peter vii. 10.

the Baltic, the North Sea, and St. George's Channel ; and that if Mount Blanc, or at least Chimborazo, were thrown into the Pacific Ocean, it would be lofty enough to constitute an island ; whilst La Place has felt justified in concluding, from the height of the tides, that the mean depth of the ocean does not exceed a thousand yards (the height of Salève, or Hecla) ; and whilst they would demonstrate to us the absolute insufficiency of the seas for the vast submersions which our globe has undergone ; the Scriptures tell us, " the earth has been drawn out of the water, and that it subsists amongst the waters,"¹ and that its solid crust encloses a GREAT ABYSS (תְּהוֹם רַבָּה), whose fountains were broken up (בִּבְקָעָה) at the time of the deluge,² as at that of chaos, and the innumerable ages which preceded it.—When they speak of the Flood, they suppose inundations and disorder, such as infidels of former times have ever considered too mighty for belief ; and yet, in the present day, geologists rather feel them to be insufficient to account for all the devastation they find in examining the earth.—When they recount the circumstances and the progress of this immense submersion, they reveal facts which the science of moderns has not yet universally adopted, but which it cannot contradict any more than it can other facts :—an internal fire, which, by increasing the temperature of the mighty waters, would, on the one hand, cause an excessive evaporation and impetuous rains, as if the barriers of heaven were

¹ 2 Pet. iii. 5.² Gen. vii. 11.

removed; and, on the other, an irresistible rarefaction, which not only raised the waters from their retreat, broke up the fountains of the GREAT DEEP, and swelled the overwhelming waves to the level of the highest mountains; but which caused immense deposits of chalk, under the double action of excessive heat, and of a pressure equal to 8,000 atmospheres!¹—When they describe the state of our globe, anterior to its being called into form, they attribute to it internal heat and fire, and cover it entirely with water, in its state of liquidity.²—When they narrate the creation of birds and fishes, they give them a common origin; and it is known that modern naturalists have proved that between these two classes of animals there exists very intimate relations; not indeed appearing outwardly to the eye, but which their anatomy has disclosed, and even to the microscopic form of the globules of

¹ Water expands $\frac{1}{23}$ in passing from the temperature of melted ice to that of the boiling point; an elevation of 16° or 17° of Reaumur, would, therefore, augment its volume $\frac{1}{111}$. Now it is found, by a simple calculation, that the quantity of water necessary to overflow the earth to the height of $\frac{1}{1,000}$ of the radius of the globe, is equal to $\frac{1}{333}$ of its entire volume (or to $\frac{1}{111}$ of its third part). If, then, we suppose that the third of the globe is metallic (at the mean specific gravity of 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ °), that the second third is solid (at a gravity of 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ °), and that the remaining third is water; then 1°, the mean specific gravity of the entire globe, would be equal to 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ (according with the conclusions of Maskeline and Cavendish); and 2°, an increase of heat equal to 16° of Reaumur, in the mean temperature of the mass of the waters at the time of the Deluge, would have sufficed to overflow the earth to the height of 6.368 yards; that is to say, 1.546 yards above the top of Mount Blanc.—This hypothesis very much resembles that of Sir Henry Englefield.

² Gen. i. 2.

their blood.¹—When they arrest the course of the sun (that is to say, the earth's rotation), in the days of Joshua the son of Nun, they are careful to stay the moon also, in the same proportion, and by the same cause ; a precaution which, as Chaubard shews,² no astronomer, ignorant of our diurnal motion, could have imagined ; since, after all that has been said, this miracle involves nothing more than the prolongation of the day.³—When they tell of the Lord's arrival as lightning, “in the twinkling of an eye,” at the last day, they bear an additional testimony to the earth's rotation, and to the existence of the antipodes ; because, at that solemn interval, it will be day for one part of the world's inhabitants, and night for the other.⁴—When they describe the bygone and future riches of the land of Canaan, to which a marvellous power of vegetation is promised in the last days, it is termed rich, not only in fountains, but in “subterranean waters ;”⁵ and they seem to anticipate the idea of draining, by which the moderns have learned to fertilize a barren country.⁶—When they speak of the languages of

¹ Memoirs of Dr. J. L. Prevost, at Geneva. ² Chaubard's *Elements of Geology*. 1 vol. 8vo. Paris. The author there establishes, by numerous arguments, the chronological coincidence of the miracle of Joshua with the deluges of Ogyges and Deucalion. He there remarks that these two overflowings relate to the same period, were of the same duration, were characterised by the same catastrophes, and produced currents directed in the same way, viz. from west to east.

³ Josh. x. 12. ⁴ Luke xvii. 31, 34 ; Matt. xxiv. ⁵ Deut. viii. 7.

⁶ Deut. viii. 7. “A land of brooks of water, of fountains, and depths that spring out of valleys and hills” (זרמח). See also Isa. xxxv. 6 ; Ezek. xxxi. 4 ; and Psalm lxxviii. 15, 16.

men, they give them a primitive unity, which seems to be contradicted by a cursory view of the varied speech of nations, but which a deeper examination confirms.—When they narrate the deliverance of Noah, they give to the rainbow dimensions which, at the first aspect, we find too limited; which we should have multiplied a hundred fold, had we been charged with the recital; but which mature study of the fact has established as sufficient.—When they speak of the number of the stars, instead of supposing a thousand (1,022), like the catalogue of Hipparchus; or exactly 1,026, like that of Ptolemy; (whilst, in the two hemispheres together, the most experienced vision cannot discover more than 5,000; whilst, previously to the invention of the telescope, the eye could not count more than a thousand, under the most favourable circumstances;) the Scriptures declare that they are INNUMERABLE, (Gen xv. 5.) They compare them, as Herschel has done, to the sand of the sea; they tell us that God has scattered them with his hand, like dust, throughout the immensity of space, and yet that “he calleth them all by their names.”—When they speak of space, hear with what profound wisdom and sublimity it is pourtrayed; how careful in its noble poetry, how wise in its sublimity! “The heavens declare the glory of God, and the EXPANSE showeth his handy-work. There is no speech nor language, nevertheless their voice is heard.”—When they speak of the relations which the stars bear to this sublunary world, instead of

supposing them animated, as did the ancients; instead of even attributing to them any influence upon human affairs, as was so long persisted in by the christian states of France and Italy, even to the period of the Reformation, they tell us that they are inert matter; luminous, indeed, but arranged and dependent; the heavens, even the heaven of heavens, proceed with order, with the oneness and unity of an army which advances to the conflict. "Lift up your eyes on high, and behold, who hath created all these things? He who bringeth out their host by order, and who calleth them all by their names; not one faileth. Why then sayest thou, O Jacob, My way is hid from the Lord, and my God sustains not my right?"¹—When they describe the heavens, they carefully discriminate a three-fold character:—in the first place, the heaven of the birds, of tempests, of the powers of the air, and of spiritual wickednesses; then the heaven of the starry host; and, lastly, *the third heaven, the heaven of heavens*. But when they speak of God, whose handy-work all this is, how exalted, yet how gentle is their language! "Thy way is in the sea, and thy path in the great waters."² "Behold, the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee."³ "Within what bounds will you confine Him?" "To what will ye liken God?"⁴ "He has set his glory above the heavens, and he humbleth himself even to behold the things that are in heaven?" "If you would take the wings

¹ Isa. xl. 26, 27. ² Psalm lxxvii. 19. ³ 1 Kings viii. 27.

⁴ Isa. xl. 18.

of the morning, and fly with the rapidity of light, whither would you go far from his face, or flee from his presence?"¹ And when they have thus dwelt upon these visible glories, they tell us further, "Lo! these are but parts of his ways; how little the portion that is known of him!"² And, finally, having as it were exhausted language in recounting all his greatness as Creator, they add, "He telleth the number of the stars, yet he healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds;"³ "admirable in counsel, and wonderful in means, yet he puts our tears into his bottle;"⁴ "a sparrow falleth not to the ground without his permission, and the very hairs of our head are all numbered."⁵ "This eternal God, (O righteous man,) is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms."⁶ "O Lord, how manifold are thy works!"⁷ and thou hast magnified thy mercy above thy glory!

And now in the midst of all these marvels, "where shall we find wisdom,—and where is the place of understanding? The abyss saith, It is not in me; and the sea answers, It is not with me. God alone understandeth the way thereof, and he knoweth the place thereof; for he looketh to the ends of the earth, and seeth under the whole heaven. When he gave to the air its weight, and to the waters their just measure; when he made a decree for the rain, and a way for the lightning of the thunder; then did he see wisdom, and explored its

¹ Psalm cxxxix. 7. ² Job xxvi. 14. ³ Psalm cxlvii. 3. ⁴ Psalm lvi. 8.

⁵ Matt. x. 29—30. ⁶ Deut. xxxiii. 27. ⁷ Psalm civ. 24.

depths ; then he said unto man, To fear the Lord, that is thy wisdom ; and to depart from evil, that is understanding."¹

Such is, then, the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures ; and it is thus we find only the reflection of heavenly radiance, where some have thought to discover a stain. If with a calm and reverential hand you draw aside the veil which appears sometimes to shroud these truths from your view, you will discover a majestic splendour ; for the Scriptures descend, like Moses from the holy mount, bearing to us the tables of testimony. Where you have dreaded obscurity, there you find light ; where there has been raised an objection, God converts it into a witness ; where there has been a doubt, there rests an assurance.

We conclude, therefore, in regard to this seventh objection, that the difficulties still become the proofs ; and that, on this point, as on all others, we must, in every page throughout the Bible, recognise the utterance of God.

But now let us hear a final objection.

SECTION VIII.—ST. PAUL'S *own Avowals*.

We are sometimes told, it would be superfluous to attempt to dispute respecting the fact of a partial, or occasional inspiration of the Scriptures, since the apostle Paul himself has cut short the question. Has he not, in fact, been careful to

¹ Job xxviii.

distinguish what he gave by inspiration, from what he wrote in his own name, as a simple believer? And do we not perceive, in his First Epistle to the Corinthians, that he, three times, clearly expresses this distinction, on the occasion of several questions which had been addressed to him on the subject of marriage?

In the first place, in the twenty-fifth verse of the seventh chapter, he says, "Now, concerning virgins, I have NO COMMANDMENT FROM THE LORD, yet I express A JUDGMENT, as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful."

Again, in the tenth verse of the same chapter, he writes, "And unto the married I command, YET NOT I, BUT THE LORD; let not the wife depart from her husband, and let not the husband put away his wife."

And, finally, in the twelfth verse, where he adds, "But to the rest speak I, NOT THE LORD: if any brother hath a wife that believeth not, let him not put her away," &c.

They see clearly in these three sentences, that there are in the apostle's epistles, some passages which are from Paul himself, and other passages which are from God; that is to say, some passages which are inspired, and others which are not.

The answer is easy.

As soon as these objections are looked into more closely, it will be found that it is not possible to employ them against the doctrine of a plenary inspiration.

Far from setting limits to the divine character of the apostolic words, these verses, on the contrary, employ a language which the most entire and most supreme inspiration could alone justify. St. Paul could not have thus spoken, otherwise than by placing his epistles, as St. Peter has done,¹ I was going to say, "UPON A LEVEL with the rest of the holy Scriptures;" but we must say, ABOVE them; inasmuch as he gives utterance in them to a more recent and more obligatory expression of the Lord's will. Of this we shall proceed to judge.

What does the apostle of Jesus Christ do in the seventh chapter?—He there treats of three cases of conscience. With regard to one of these, God says he has neither commanded anything, nor forbidden anything. "He who marries his virgin, sins not. I am not herein charged with *any command*; but in my character of apostle, it is *an advice* only, which I give you on the part of the Lord;" and he is careful to add, at verse 40, "and I think also that I have the Spirit of God." The Lord, in this matter, says the apostle, leaves you free; he does not cast a snare in your way, and if you do not think fit to follow the general counsel which is given you, you do not thereby violate any commandment; you do not sin. Only he who marries does well; but he who marries not, does better.

With regard to the second case, on the contrary, be careful; because THERE IS A COMMANDMENT FROM THE LORD. The Lord has already pronounced his

¹ 2 Pet. iii. 16.

will (Matt. v. 31, 32; Mal. ii. 14, 15), and I have nothing further to add to it. It is, therefore, NOT I, the apostle of Jesus Christ, IT IS THE LORD HIMSELF, who has already made known his will:—"To those among Christians who are married, I command, yet not I, but the Lord, that the wife separate not herself from her husband, and that the husband put not away his wife." (1 Cor. vii. 10, 11.)

But with regard to the third case, I mean respecting brethren who are married to unbelieving wives, you had a commandment from the Lord in the Old Testament; I now revoke it, and "*I think also that I have the Spirit of the Lord.*" I abolish the ancient order, and I am charged to replace it by a contrary rule. It is not the Lord (verse 12) who tells you to retain an unbelieving wife; it is I, Paul, the apostle, "not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead."¹

Thus it appears, by the fullest evidence, that the apostle, instead of appealing to the ancient word of the Lord, revokes it, in order to substitute a different rule; so that this passage, far from weakening the inspiration, eminently confirms it; because it would assume the character of daring blasphemy, if the apostle did not feel that, in holding this language, he was the mouth of God; and if, upon his own authority, he had ventured to say, "It is not the Lord, IT IS I! I say unto you, and not the Lord, if any brother have an unbelieving wife, let him not

¹ Gal. i. 1.

CHAPTER III.

EXAMINATION OF EVASIONS.

THERE have been, as we have said, several systems of exceptions proposed. Some persons, while fully admitting that the subject-matter of Scripture has been given by God, would, at the same time, maintain that the style and expressions are purely human;—others have excluded from inspiration the books which are historical;—and, finally, others have wished, at least, to expunge certain details, which to them appeared too vulgar and too little to edification, to be attributed to the Spirit of God.

SECTION I.—*May not Inspiration pertain to the Subject-matter only, without affecting also the Words?*

In writing their sacred books, say some, the prophets and apostles were undoubtedly inspired with regard to their thoughts, but we must believe that they were afterwards left to themselves as regards

their language; so that, in this written revelation, the ideas are given to us from God, but the expressions by man.—The task of the sacred writers resembled, in some sort, that of a man to whose view very highly-coloured pictures were successively presented, with the charge that he should simply describe them just as they had passed before his eyes. So, also, the Divine Spirit may have presented the sacred truths to the minds of the prophets and evangelists, only leaving to them the care of expressing them. And this manner of viewing their work, it is added, will very felicitously supply us with the reason of the striking differences of style which their respective records display. We answer :—

1. That this system is directly contrary to the testimony of the Scripture. The Bible declares itself to have been written, “not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth.”¹ It calls itself—the word of God;—the words of God;²—the voice of God;—the oracles of God;³—the living oracles of God;⁴—the holy Scripture;⁵—the writing of God. A writing consists of letters and words, and not alone of invisible thoughts; now “all SCRIPTURE is inspired by God,” we are told.⁶ What is WRITTEN is, therefore, inspired of God (θεόπνευστος)! and that which is inspired of God is, “ALL SCRIPTURE,” this comprehends ALL that is written (πᾶσα γραφή).

¹ 1 Cor. ii. 13.² Throughout.³ Rom. iii. 2.⁴ Acts vii. 38.⁵ 2 Tim. iii. 15.⁶ 2 Tim. iii. 16.

2. If this system is contrary to the Scripture, it is also irrational. The ideas of our fellow-men take a form in words; and in this way only can they be understood. Mind can only be revealed to us through the flesh. Its character is unknown; its desires, its experience, we know not; we do not even suspect their existence, nor can we trace their associations, until after they have been invested with a body (as it were), and received organs through which to manifest themselves to us. My most intimate friend is known to me only by his voice and gestures. If he employed not these, in vain would he be near me for twenty years; he would be to me as though he were not in existence.

Furthermore, such is the intimate connexion which exists between mind and its organs, between ideas and words, that we learn not only the existence of the one by the language of the other; but (even after they have spoken) we doubt the true character of the communication so long as we have not the assurance, that the organ is a faithful interpreter of the mind,—that the word bears the exact impress of the idea, and the expression that of the thought. As long as we fear that the language has not been the ready and competent handmaid of the will, so long shall we be uncertain whether or not we are mistaken. When we know that God himself has instilled the pure thoughts of heaven into the mind of a writer, in order that we might receive, by his words, a sure revelation, must he continually assure us that the language is intelligent,

that the representations are exact, and that the objects deposited in that mind are reproduced unchanged?

Language is therefore the wondrous mirror which reflects to us the mysteries of our being.

Supposing you were a bereaved and sorrowing son, and to console you, God should vouchsafe to present, for a few moments, as in a glass, the revered features of your absent mother; would it suffice that he should place it close to you, even in a position favourable to your gaze? No, without doubt, the mirror must also be free from curvature or blemish. If unequal or unfaithful, what would it avail you? You might, it is true, have before you the gladdening features of a mother, whose heart would beat in response to your own with the liveliest emotions, and whose tender looks might beam towards you with the ardent expression of maternal love and blessing: but all this would be in vain; your eyes would see only a stranger; perhaps the repulsive appearance of one deformed, from whose features you would turn away, exclaiming—"O, my beloved mother, this is not thy countenance!" So, also, would it be for us with the thought of God, if we were obliged to receive it disfigured by the errors of the human language which served as its medium. This is not thy thought, O my God, we must exclaim. It is necessary, therefore, that God should secure as much the fidelity of the recital as the reality of the objects.

This hypothesis will, doubtless, enable us to understand how very irrational is the supposition of receiving, with exactitude and certainty, the thoughts of another, through the medium of inexact and uncertain expressions. Are they received otherwise than by words? And without the words of God himself, how could we be sure of possessing the thoughts of God?

3. This theory of a divine revelation, in which you would have the inspiration of the thought, without the inspiration of the language, is so inevitably irrational, that it cannot be sincere: and it presently fails even those who advance it;—for they must see, that it obliges them to descend much lower with their arguments, than their first position seemed to indicate. Let us hear them. If the words are of man, say they, the thoughts are those of God. And how will they prove this to us? Alas! once more, by attributing to this written word of God, contradictions, mistakes, and misconceptions! Is it, then, only the words which they impeach?—and are not these pretended errors much more in the thoughts than in the words? So true it is, that we cannot separate the one from the other; and that a revelation of the mind of God involves the inspiration of the *WORD* of God.

4. This theory is not only unscriptural, irrational, and mischievous, but it is, moreover, arbitrarily assumed; and is a mere gratuitous hypothesis.

5. It is, moreover, very useless, for it determines nothing. You have a difficulty, say you, in con-

ceiving how the Holy Spirit could have given the words of the holy Scriptures; but can you better tell us how he gave the thoughts to which they give expression? Would it, for instance, be more easy for you to explain how God suggested to Moses a knowledge of the operations of the creation, or communicated to St. John those of the last day, than to conceive how he dictated to them the recital in the Hebrew or Greek language?

6. But we add further:—That which, in this theory, ought especially to strike the attentive mind, is its extremely inconsequential character; since those who most strenuously insist upon it, are yet obliged to admit, that by far the greater proportion of Scripture must have been inspired by God, through men, EVEN IN ITS WORDS.

Suppose that the Holy Ghost, this morning, called you to stand in a public place, to proclaim the marvellous things of God, in Russian or in Kalmuc, what would become of you, if he deemed it sufficient to supply you with thoughts, without giving you words? You might have before your eyes the third heaven, and in your heart the emotions of archangels, but you must, nevertheless, remain silent and abashed before the assembled multitude. In order that your inspiration should, in any degree, avail them, it would be necessary that the sentences, phrases, and least words of your address, should be entirely supplied to you. Indeed, they would readily dispense with your own thoughts, provided that you gave utterance (even

without your understanding them) to the thoughts of God, in his own words. Well! carry this supposition to Jerusalem, and to the persons of the apostles. When the fishermen of Capernaum and Bethsaida, assembled together in their upper room on the day of Pentecost, received the order to go forth and proclaim to every region under heaven the tidings of God's salvation, in the Latin, Parthian, Elamite, Chaldean, Coptic, and Arabic dialects, must not the words have been supplied to them? What could they then have done with the thoughts without the words? Nothing; whilst with their words they could convert the world!

When, at a later period, in the church of Corinth, believers who had received miraculous powers, spake in the assemblies in unknown tongues, and required a brother, gifted to interpret, to translate after them the unknown words which they had addressed to the brethren, was it not equally requisite that the words, as well as phrases, should be dictated to them?¹ When the prophets, one and all, after having penned their sacred pages, applied themselves to study them with as much reverence and care as they would have studied the oracles of a stranger prophet;—when they meditated, night and day, (as we are told by St. Peter,²) “searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory which should follow;”—must not their every

¹ 1 Cor. xiv.

² 2 Pet. i. 10, 11.

word, under those circumstances, have been supplied to them? When Moses narrates the creation, and the formation of the world from chaos;—when Solomon describes Eternal Wisdom;—when David, a thousand years beforehand, gives utterance to the prayer of the Son of God upon the cross;—when Daniel records, in detail, and without himself well understanding them, the future destinies of the world and church;—and when, finally, St. John continues, in his own prophecies, the revelations of the prophet Daniel;—was it not necessary that even the least important words should have been given to them? and does not every interpreter, in reading them, acknowledge how far we may be led astray from the true sense by a change in the position of even the most trivial word, by the defective rendering of the tense of a verb, or by the inconsiderate collocation of a single particle?

We are bound, therefore, to conclude that, since so considerable a portion of the Scriptures is necessarily inspired, even in its words, the system of an inspiration of the thoughts, without the inspiration of the language, is entirely inconsequential. There are not two species of the word of God in the holy Scripture;—there are not two kinds of oracles of God. If “holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost,” ALL the sacred writings are divinely inspired; and that which is divinely inspired in the sacred writings is nothing less than “ALL SCRIPTURE.”

But these last reflections lead us to something

at once more simple and important ; and objectors had need beware, here, for the question has been put erroneously. They have said that the sacred writers were inspired by God ; and they have inquired how far they could have been so ?—This was not, however, the point to be inquired into.

7. We have said that the question is with the BOOK, and not with its WRITERS. You think that God always gave them the thoughts, but not the words ; but the Scripture tells us the contrary, that God always supplied the words, and not always the thoughts. With regard to their thoughts, God might have inspired these to them, whilst they were writing, with more or less vigour or elevation : this, however, only concerns my love, not my faith. THE SCRIPTURE—the Scripture which they have transmitted to me, perhaps without having themselves caught its meaning, at least without having always fully understood it—this is what concerns me.

St. Paul may have been mistaken in his thoughts, when, on being brought before the Jewish council, and not knowing the person of “ God’s high-priest,” he went so far as to say to him, “ God shall smite thee, thou whited wall !” This matters little, provided I know that, WHEN HE WROTE THE WORD OF GOD, it was Jesus Christ speaking in him.¹

St. Peter may have been mistaken in his thoughts, when, refusing to believe that God designed to send him among the heathen, he did not acknowledge

¹ 2 Cor. xiii. 3.

that, "in every nation, the men who turn to God are accepted of him." He might be still more seriously mistaken when, at Antioch, he obliged St. Paul to "withstand him to the face," before all, "because he was worthy of blame," and "walked not uprightly, according to the truth of the gospel."¹ But, again we ask, what, after all, matters this to our faith? Faith is not concerned to know at all at what moment, or in what measure, Paul, John, Mark, James, or Peter, were inspired in their thoughts, or sanctified in their conduct: what especially concerns it is,—to know that their written words were the words of God, and that, in giving them to us, they spake "not in the words suggested by man's wisdom, but in those dictated by the Spirit of God,"² (*οὐκ ἐν διδακτοῖς ἀνθρωπίνης σοφίας λόγοις*). Thus, then, it is not they who speak, but the Holy Ghost;³ in a word, it is "God who hath spoken BY THE MOUTH of all his holy prophets since the world began."⁴

The sacred writers were SOMETIMES inspired, but the holy Scriptures ALWAYS. The time, measure, degree, and intervals of the inspiration of the men of God, are not, therefore, to us an object of faith; but the object of faith is this, that the Scripture is divinely inspired, and that it is the entire Scripture which is divinely inspired.—"A *tittle* of it can never fail."

There is, unquestionably, an inspiration of thoughts, as there is an inspiration of words;

¹ Gal. ii. 11—14. ² 1 Cor. ii. 13. ³ Mark xiii. 11. ⁴ Acts iii. 21.

but the former makes THE CHRISTIAN, whilst it is the latter which makes THE PROPHET.

A true Christian is inspired in his thoughts: the Spirit of God reveals to him "the deep things of God;"¹ flesh and blood hath not revealed to him the counsels of God and the glory of Jesus, but the Father;² for the Spirit guides him into all truth;³ and he could not truly in heart acknowledge Jesus Christ as Lord (the Lord of lords), but by the Holy Ghost.⁴ The thoughts of every true believer are, therefore, more or less inspired of God, but his words are not. He is a Christian; but he is not a prophet. The most sanctified productions of Cyprian, Augustine, Bernard, Luther, Calvin, Beza, and Leighton, are but the words of men about the truths of God—words of venerable character, no doubt, precious and powerful, and worthy of our attention on account of the wisdom with which they were endowed, and of the abundant expression which they give of the mind of God; but, after all, they are the words of men. It is altogether different with the prophet. At one time he may have, and at another he may not have, the mind of God in his thoughts. WHENEVER HE SHALL SPEAK AS A PROPHET, he will assuredly have the word of God IN HIS MOUTH. "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and the word of JEHOVAH was upon my tongue,"⁵ said David. He will be the medium of God; whether intelligent or unintelligent, volun-

¹ 2 Cor. ii. 10. ² Matt. xvi. 17. ³ John xvi. 13. ⁴ 1 Cor. xii. 3.

⁵ 2 Sam. xxiii. 1, 2.

tary or involuntary, it matters not, provided the oracles of God are imparted through him, and that I thereby receive the mind of my God in his own words.

In a word, I may be a Christian, without having upon my lips the words of God ; and one may be a prophet, without having the thoughts of God either in the heart or the understanding : but I cannot be a Christian, without having the thoughts of God in my heart ; and I cannot be a prophet, without having the words of God upon my lips.

In the language of the Bible, (which we will presently shew,) a prophet is a man in whose mouth God puts, for a season, the words which he designs to promulgate on the earth. Such a man may prophesy only at intervals, as the Spirit gives utterance.¹ He may, like king Saul, prophesy twice only in the course of his life ;² or, like Saul's messengers, but a single time.³ The words of God may, therefore, be uttered intelligently ; or *without understanding them* ; often even without *fore-thought* ; and, sometimes, even *unwillingly*.

When Daniel had completed his testimony, he tells us himself⁴ that he did not understand what the Spirit had caused him to write. When Caiaphas uttered those prophetic words, he said them "*not of himself* ;" he had the *will*, but he neither *knew* nor *understood* what God would have him utter.⁵ When Balaam advanced three times to the summit

¹ Acts ii. 4.

² 1 Sam. x. 10.

³ 1 Sam. xix. 20.

⁴ Dan. xii. 8.

⁵ John xi. 49—52.

of the rock to curse Israel, and three times successively words of blessing flowed from his lips, as it were, in spite of himself, it was because "the Lord had met Balaam, and put a word in his mouth;"¹ he had the *conscience*, but he had neither full *intelligence* nor entire *control* with regard to his prophecy. When the soldiers of Saul sought David in Ramah, and the Eternal Spirit came upon them, so that they themselves also prophesied; and when he sent others, even three times in succession, who also prophesied like the first; and when Saul profanely went thither himself, as far as the great well of Naioth, and when God (to display his own power, and to manifest to us more clearly what is the character of a prophet, and what the importance of his word,) caused his Spirit to fall also upon this faithless man; when he then pursued his journey prophesying; when the word of the Lord was in his mouth (at other times so profane); and when he prophesied before Samuel during the whole day and all the night;—what had happened to this son of Kish: "Is Saul also among the prophets?"² Yes;—and Saul was conscious of his state, and of the part he was acting as prophet; but he neither willed, nor foreknew, nor understood fully what he uttered. When the old prophet was amicably seated at table with the man of God, whom he had turned out of his way, by a faithless act of natural kindness; and when suddenly, by a power from on high, he loudly predicted the displeasure of the

¹ Numb. xxiii. 16. ² 1 Sam. xix. 18, 24.

Lord against his imprudent and culpable guest ; he prophesied with a *consciousness* of what he was doing, but without having *desired* to do it.¹ But more : did not God cause his voice to be heard in the wilderness from the mountain of Sinai before Moses and all the people ? Did he not make himself heard by a sleeping child in the tabernacle of Shiloh ?—in the ears of three apostles, and the two saints who appeared on mount Tabor ?—and to the ears of John the Baptist and all the people on the banks of the Jordan ?

Let it then be well understood, that the *sacred writings* are τὰ ἱερά γράμματα, (2 Tim. iii. 15,) that it is *all that is written* ; that is to say, the sentences and the words which are divinely inspired,—which are θεόπνευστοι. The question is, therefore, as to the *word*, and not as to the *men* who wrote it. With regard to these latter, we are little concerned. The Spirit may have, more or less, associated their individuality, conscience, recollections, and affections, with what he caused them to say ; we are responsible to know not only this, but we are called upon especially to know (as St. Peter has recorded) that “ *no WRITTEN PROPHECY came to us by the will of man ;*” but that “ *holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.*”² And as it was at the feast of Belshazzar, they were little concerned to ascertain what was in the fingers of the terrible hand which came from the wall, over against the candlestick ; every eye was rather riveted upon the fearful

¹ 1 Kings xiii. 21.

² 2 Pet. i. 21.

record which it traced there MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN, because they well knew that these words were from God ; so, in like manner, it matters little to us, as far as faith is concerned, to know what was passing in the minds of the four evangelists, whilst they were engaged in writing the scroll of their Gospels : our attention should rather be turned to the words which they have written, because we know that these words are from God. Let the prophet be as holy as Moses,—wise as Daniel,—an enemy to God as Caiaphas,—ignorant of the language in which he speaks to us as the prophets of Corinth,—polluted as Balaam,—I may say, insensible as the hand upon the palace wall at Babylon,—formless, soulless as was the air through which sounded the voice of God at Sinai, on the banks of the Jordan, and on Mount Tabor,—we repeat, all is of little consequence, except where the personality of a writer might become an essential part of his revelation. Thy thoughts, O my God, thy mind and thy words, are what concern me !

SECTION II.—*Ought the Historical Books to be excepted from Inspiration ?*

It will be admitted (we are told), that inspiration may extend even to the choice of expressions, wherever this miraculous work may have been necessary ; in the framing of doctrines, for instance, or in order to prophesy the history of an age more ancient than the birth of the mountains, or to announce a future event which God alone could

know. But would you venture to maintain that men, contemporary with the facts they wrote of, needed the Holy Ghost to assist them to record events of which they had themselves been witnesses, or which they had heard from others?—to narrate to us the humble marriage of Ruth, in the village of Bethlehem; or the feelings of Esther, in the palace of Shushan; or the names of the kings of Israel and Judah; their reigns, their lives, their deaths and genealogies? Luke, for instance, who from Troas had accompanied the apostle to Jerusalem, to Cæsarea, to the island Malta, and even to Rome; had he not sufficient recollection to tell us how Paul was seized under the porticos of the temple,—how his nephew disclosed to him, in the castle, the conspiracy of the forty Jews,—how the officer led the young man to the chief captain, and how the latter took him by the hand, and went with him aside privately, and inquired of him all that he knew? For the narration of facts so simple and so well known to him, was there any need of the continual intervention of a power from on high? We think not, say objectors; and persist that it is neither necessary nor reasonable to believe that all the historical chapters of the two Testaments are divinely inspired.

To such objections our first answer will be always very simple:—“ALL Scripture,” we say, “is divinely inspired.” Thou hast knowledge of the holy Scriptures, O Timothy; well: “All these holy writings, all the Scripture, is given by inspi-

ration of God.”¹ We know not that the Holy Spirit excepts any part from this declaration ; and we cannot admit the right of either man or angel to adventure any.

But further. If it were lawful to put one book of God before another book of God,—if we might distinguish, in the firmament of the Scriptures, constellations of exceeding glory, and stars of the first magnitude,—we should certainly give preference to the historical books. In fact :—

1. It is to the historical books that the most striking and reverential testimony is rendered by the prophets in the Old Testament, and by the apostles in the New. What is there more sacred in the Old Testament, than the Pentateuch ? and what is there greater in the New, than the four Gospels ? Is it not solely of the historical books of the Bible that it is written, “The law of the Lord is perfect ;—thy testimonies are wonderful ; they stand fast for ever and ever,—they give wisdom to the simple,—they are pure, more to be desired than gold,—the words of the Lord are pure words, as gold seven times purified,—blessed is the man that hath such delight in thy law, as to meditate therein day and night ?”

2. Moreover, remark with what respect our Saviour himself quotes them ; and in citing them he delights to honour the divine decrees, even in their least details, and sometimes even in the use of a single word.

¹ 2 Tim. iii. 14—16.

3. The histories of the Bible have not been given merely to transmit to future ages the record of accomplished events; they are presented to the church through all time, to make known to her, by recorded facts, the character of her God. They are designed to make known to her the mind of God, his purposes, and the invisible things which belong to him; the heaven where he dwells, his glory, his angels, and those mysteries which "the angels desire to look into."¹ All this, therefore, requires the fullest *theopneustia*.

4. But yet more remains to be said:—the historical Scriptures are given to reveal to us the deep things of man. It is said of the word of God, that it "pierces like a sword, even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit; that it is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart." This is true of the written word, as of God's own word, because one is the language of the other; but it is especially true of the historical part. Do you not perceive, in its narratives, that it is a two-edged sword, and that it searches the conscience? And in the same manner that it describes to you what passed on our globe, when all was chaos, and when the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the deep; so it equally brings to light what is passing in the depths of the human heart, the mysteries of the invisible world, and the silent ministry of the angels of God upon earth: it discloses secret motives, concealed faults,

¹ 1 Pet. i. 12.

and human thoughts, which otherwise would never have been known, but in the light which shall manifest every thing at the last day. Is it thus that mere men write history ?

5. But this is not all. Notice further the fact, that unknown even to their authors, how full are the historical parts of the Bible of the future. Whilst they narrate to us events which are passed, "they become (says St. Paul) types to us who live in these last days."¹ They narrate, it is true, national or domestic scenes; but, throughout, they tell of Jesus Christ, and unceasingly pourtray him prophetically in every feature and in every character. Look at the history of Adam, of Noah, of Abraham, of Isaac, of Joseph, and Moses; the account of the offered Lamb, the deliverance from Egypt, the fiery cloudy pillar, the manna, the rock which was Christ (1 Cor. x. 4); of the scape-goat (Azazel), and of all the sacrifices; of Joshua, David, Solomon, Jonah, and Zerubbabel. I must present the entire history to do justice to this great truth. But to appreciate it the more fully, turn to what Paul has written of Hagar, of Sarah, of Aaron, and Melchizedec.

If we carefully study the Scriptures we shall speedily recognise and admire the ceaseless power of inspiration in every part; and we shall not fail to feel, that if in the Bible there are pages which especially require to be inspired in every line and

¹ 1 Cor. x. 11.

word, they are those of the historical books. They, especially, preach, they reveal, they teach, they legislate, and they prophesy.

The Scriptures, then, must not be compared with other historical books: they have quite another object and bearing.

This plenary inspiration was absolutely necessary for the relation of facts which were inaccessible to the knowledge of man. It was necessary, to the sacred writers,—in recording the creation of the universe, the arrangement of chaos, the birth of light, the upheaving of the mountains, the ministry of angels, the purposes of God, the thoughts of the heart of man, and his hidden faults. It was necessary,—that they might prefigure the anointed One by a thousand types, unperceived by the writer himself; and thus to shew forth, even from the past, the character of the Messiah, his sufferings, death, and the glory which should follow. It was necessary,—that they might suitably treat even of events known to them; to be silent on some, to record others, to characterise and judge of them, so as to unfold to us therein the mind of God. It was necessary,—to enable them correctly to describe, in the just proportion of God's estimate, and of the need of the future church, the scenes, either national or domestic, which were typically to represent the work of redemption, or to foretel the character of the last times, and take a comprehensive view of the ages after them. And, finally, it was necessary,—as the ground of their confidence, as also to deter-

mine their reserve ; for the wise use of their expressions, and for that remarkable self-possession which they have always maintained.

6. We could wish we had time here to speak of their dramatic power (if such an expression may be allowed)—of that divine and undefinable power—that mysterious and ever-fresh attractiveness which belongs to all their narratives, which captivates the mind in every clime ; in which, throughout life, we find, as in the scenes of nature, a charm always new ; and which, after having arrested and engaged our affections in early youth, have a still stronger hold upon the heart when hoary years find us on the verge of the tomb. There must surely be something superhuman in the very humanity of terms so familiar and so artless. Men know not how to write thus. Who will tell us the secret of this captivating power ? Where is it to be found ? We should find it difficult to explain, perhaps : it seems to consist in an ineffable blending of simplicity and depth, of what is unexpected and what is natural, of local scenes and spiritual revelations : it is, because these recitals are at once rapid and natural ; present details, yet are concise ; it is, in the harmony and truth of the sentiments ; it is man, it is nature, in unaffected reality. In a word, we must be sensible (even without being able to account for the sensation), that he who speaks here, knows all the most secret and intimate chords of the human heart, and touches them at will, with a hand light and yet powerful, in the exact degree which

his own wisdom dictates. Re-peruse the scenes of Ruth and Boaz in the fields of Bethlehem, those of Abraham and Isaac on Mount Moriah, of David and Jonathan, of Elijah and Elisha, of Naaman the Syrian, of the widow of Sarepta, or the Shunamite; and far above all these, of the life and death of the Son of Man; afterwards search through the whole range of human writings, and see if you can discover anything at all comparable.

Read, if you will, the four Vedahs, or the voluminous collection of Pauthier, the sacred books of the East, Confucius, Manon, Mahomet;¹ and see if, in any part of them, you can find eight lines which can be compared with the incomparable narrations of Scripture. But for the fear of too extensive dissertation, we could have wished to have entered into some comparisons, and to have taken alternately the history of similar facts from the Old Testament and from the Koran; from the New Testament and from the Pseudo-gospels; from the patriarchal scenes of Genesis, and from those which men have depicted whenever they have become historians. Re-peruse, for instance, in Moses, the life of Joseph; his infancy, his sorrows, his temptations, down to that inimitable scene of the eleven children of Jacob appearing before their brother; to the "*God be gracious unto thee, my son*" (xliii. 49), and to the "*I Joseph*" (תפילי יוסף) which at no age can be re-perused without renewed emotions: afterwards

¹ *The sacred books of the East* (including the Chou-King, or Book par excellence.)

take up this same history in Mahomet ; read his twelfth chapter, entitled “Joseph,” extending to the number of one hundred and eleven verses, and beginning thus :—“ We have caused this book to come down from heaven in the Arab language, in order that it may be understood ; and we are going to relate the most beautiful history which we have revealed to thee in this Koran.” Go and see. Oh no ! It must be said of the historical Scriptures, even in this respect, that never has man, either before or since, written as they are.

7. Their divine conciseness has, perhaps, neither been sufficiently remarked nor admired. If, in this respect, you would appreciate the Scriptures, compare them with the biographical works of men, or with the code of doctrines which men put forth when left to themselves. Look, for instance, at the modern church of the Jews, and that of the Latins : whilst the former has added its two Talmuds to the Scripture (by attributing to them the same divine authority), one of which (that of Jerusalem) forms a large folio volume, and the other (that of Babylon), which is the more esteemed, and which all her doctors are bound to study, is a work of twelve folio volumes ;¹ and whilst the Roman church, in her Council of Trent, has declared that she “ receives with the same affection and reverence as holy Scripture, her own traditions concerning

¹ The last Amsterdam edition. Maimonides has made a learned extract from it in his *Yad Hachazakah*. See Prideaux, *History of the Jews*. Amsterdam, vol. ii. p. 130.

faith and morals"—that is to say, the ponderous repertory of her synodical statutes and decretals, her bulls, canons, and the writings of the Fathers; and then see what the Holy Spirit has accomplished in the Bible, and there admire the heavenly wisdom of its inimitable brevity.¹

Who among ourselves, having been, during three years and a half, the constant witness and ardent friend of a man like Jesus Christ, could have given, in sixteen or twenty short chapters, the history of that entire life; of his birth, youth, ministry, miracles, sermons, sufferings, death, resurrection, and ascension into heaven? Who among us could have recorded so much goodness, without an exclamation; so many miracles, without a passing reflection; so many sublime thoughts, without any emphasis; so much suffering, without a complaint; so much injustice, without bitterness of feeling; so many blameless infirmities in the Master, and so many guilty infirmities in his disciples, without any reserve; such ingratitude in their shameful abandonment of him; and such contradiction, ignorance, and hardness of heart, without any apology, or comment? Is it thus that men narrate?

Who among us would have known how to distinguish between what might be stated cursorily, and what should be given in detail? Who among us, for instance, would have felt that he

¹ Council of Trent. Sess. 4. 1st and 2d Decrees, published 28th April, 1546.—Bellarmine, *De Verbo Dei*, book iv. c. 3, 5, 6.—Coton, book ii. c. 24, 34, 35.—Baile, Diss. i. Du Perron against Tilenus.

ought to record the entire creation of the world in a single chapter of thirty-one verses ; and then the temptation, fall, and condemnation of our race in another chapter of twenty-four verses ; whilst so many chapters and pages are devoted to the construction of the tabernacle and of its vessels, that these might be, for future ages, a continual typical representation of Jesus Christ, and of his redemption ? Who among us, for the same reason, would have occupied a fifth part of the book of Genesis with the history of one only of the twelve children of Jacob, and have considered that two chapters would be sufficient for seventeen hundred years of the history of man, from the Fall of Adam to the Flood ? Who among ourselves would have thought of mentioning only four women (and such women !) in the forty-two generations of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, and have told of the incestuous Tamar, the impure Rahab, of Ruth the Moabitess, and the adulterous wife of the injured Uriah, without a single accompanying reflection ? Who among us, after having shared, during ten years, the labours of St. Paul, his perils, imprisonments, preachings, and prophetic gifts, could have penned the history of twenty-two years of such a life without saying a word of himself, and without making known to others (otherwise than by a change of the personal pronoun, Acts xvi. 10), that from Troas to Jerusalem and Cæsarea, and from thence to Malta, and on to Rome, he had been his suffering, faithful, and indefatigable companion ? It must be learned

from the pen of St. Paul himself, who, in his last imprisonment, thus writes to Timothy :—" At my first answer, no man stood with me, but all forsook me. Only Luke is with me." (2 Tim. iv. 11, 16; Philem. 24; Col. iv. 14.) Holy and heavenly moderation ! humble and noble silence ! the Divine Spirit alone could have taught it !

Where, among all uninspired historians, could you find a man who would have written the Acts of the Apostles in the manner St. Luke has done ? Who would have known how to condense into thirty pages the ecclesiastical history of thirty of the brightest years of Christianity, from the ascension of the Son of Man into heaven, to the imprisonment of St. Paul in the capital of the Roman world ? Incomparable history ! At once how concise and yet extensive ! What is there that is not found in it ? Sermons to Jews, to Greeks, before tribunals, in the Areopagus, the Sanhedrim, in the public places and synagogues, before a pro-consul, and before kings :—delightful descriptions of the primitive church ;—the miraculous and vividly depicted scenes of her history ;—the interposition of angels to deliver, to warn, and to punish ;—controversies and divisions in christian assemblies ;—new institutions in the church ;—the history of a first council, and its synodical letter ;—comments on Scripture ;—accounts of heresies ;—solemn and terrible judgments of God ;—appearances of the Lord, in the way, in the temple, and in the prison ;—details of conversions, often miraculous, and sur-

prisingly varied—such as those of Eneas, the Eunuch, the centurion Cornelius, the Roman gaoler, the pro-consul, Lydia, Apollos, and that of a multitude at Jerusalem; without noticing those incipient workings which are apparent in the emotions of king Agrippa, the disquietude of Felix, the professions of Simon Magus, the terrors of Felix, and the courtesy of the centurion Julius. In it we also read of missionary enterprises;—various solutions of divers cases of conscience;—the common possession of external things by Christians of various classes;—mutual prepossessions;—disputes between brethren, and between apostles;—outbreaks of natural temper, explanations, and, over all, still the triumph of love:—communications between military authorities, and between one pro-consul and another;—risings from the dead;—revelations made to the church, connected with the immediate calling in of Gentiles;—collections in one church for the poor of another;—prophecies;—national scenes;—punishments inflicted or prepared for;—arraignments before Jewish councils, or Roman authorities, before governors and kings;—Christians meeting from house to house; their emotions, their prayers, their love, and their doubtings;—a persecuting monarch smitten by an angel and eaten of worms, at a time when, to please the populace, he had put one apostle to death, and had doomed another to a like fate;—persecutions under every form, by synagogues, by princes, by municipal authorities, by the Jews, and by popular insurrec-

tions;—deliverances of the men of God, at one time, by a child, at another, by an angel, at others, by a Roman centurion, or by the captain of a ship, by heathen magistrates, and idolatrous soldiers;—tempests and shipwrecks, whose accurate details still delight (as I have witnessed) the mariners of our own day. And all this recorded in thirty pages, or twenty-eight short chapters! Admirable brevity! Must it not have been the Spirit of God who wrote with such conciseness?—who selected the details, who caused the devout, varied, brief, and richly significant manner in which so few words are employed, and so many things set forth? Plenitude, brevity, clearness, unction, simplicity, elevation, and practical richness;—such a book of ecclesiastical history the people of God required. True is it, and we again repeat it, it is not thus that mere men write history.

Could you find upon earth a man capable of relating the assassination of his mother with the calmness, method, sobriety, and apparent insensibility which mark the fourfold record of the crucifixion of Jesus by the evangelists;—of that Jesus whom they loved more than a mother could be loved, yea, more than life is loved;—of that Jesus whom they had seen prostrate at Gethsemane, then betrayed, abandoned, dragged bound into Jerusalem, and at last nailed naked upon a cross; whilst the sun was darkened, the earth rent, and He who had been the restorer of the dead, was himself

bowed down to death? Was not the Spirit of God required for every line, and every word of such a recital, and in the selection of suitable details from such an age and world of memorable scenes?

8. It was necessary, moreover, that the sacred writers should be entirely under this divine direction, in order to possess that prophetic reserve which they have maintained in so many respects; and that heavenly prudence which is evident, not alone in what they have written, but in that upon which they have preserved silence; not alone in the terms which they have employed, but in those which they have avoided.

And, in order to estimate this in some degree, consider, for instance, when they speak of the mother of Jesus. What divine foresight, and what prophetic wisdom! whether we look at their narratives, or their expressions. In their ardent adoration of the Son, how easily might they be betrayed into speaking in too reverential terms of the mother. Would not a single word, which the natural incautiousness of first emotions might have let fall, for ever have authorized the idolatries of future generations towards Mary, and the criminal adoration which is paid to her? But a word of this character they never recorded. What! have they not even called her "the mother of God?" No, not even by this title; although Jesus is with them Emmanuel, the God-man, the Word which was from the beginning, which was with God, which was God, and which was made flesh. Hear themselves. What

do they say of Mary, after the death and resurrection of the Saviour? One single sentence, and then are silent respecting her; viz. "These all continued in prayer with the women, and with Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren." (*"Hi omnes erant perseverantes unanimiter in oratione cum mulieribus, et Mariâ matre Jesûs, et fratribus ejus."*) She is neither named first nor last; she appears as "the mother of Jesus," amongst the brethren of Jesus and the women of Galilee. And what do they say of her before the death of the Lord? Mark it well. Ah! it is not thus that men relate. Of all the intercourse which Jesus Christ had with his mother, from the commencement of his ministry, they have only selected three sentences to be handed down to us. The first is on the occasion when she interfered, at the commencement of his ministry, and looked to him for a miracle; viz. "Woman, (woman!) what have I to do with thee?"¹ When afterwards one from among the crowd, in her enthusiasm, exclaimed, "Blessed is the womb that bare thee!" he replied, "Yea, rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it."² This was the second occasion; and now mark the third. His mother and brethren were shaken in their faith, having heard those who said, "He is mad" (*dicebant enim: Quoniam in furore est*); and they came and told him, "Thy mother and thy brethren are without, desiring to speak with thee." "Who is my mother?" answered he; and stretching

¹ John ii. 4.² Luke xi. 27, 28.

forth his hand towards his disciples, said, "Behold my mother! every woman who shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my mother." (*Ecce mater mea!*) And when, finally, he looked upon her from the cross, he calls her no more by the term "mother," but bequeaths her to the care of the disciple whom he loved, saying, "Woman, behold thy son!" and to John, "Behold thy mother!" and from that hour this disciple received her into his house, not to adore, but to protect her, as a weak and suffering being, whose heart a sword had pierced.

Again, we ask, is it thus that men write history; and was it not indispensable that the Holy Spirit should be the sole narrator of these facts?

We delight in citing other examples: they crowd upon our mind whilst we are writing, and it is with pain we pass them over; for the more closely these historical books are examined, the more does the prophetic wisdom of God, who dictated them, become manifest, in details which are at first unperceived. We delight particularly in dwelling upon the marked prophetic wisdom with which the Holy Spirit, when he has more than once related some important fact, is constantly careful to vary his expressions, in order to prevent the false interpretations which would have been given to them, and to condemn beforehand the errors which long after might be associated with them. We would, for instance, cite the surprising and unexpected manner in which the tenth commandment of the Decalogue

has been repeated in the book of Deuteronomy,¹ with a remarkable transposition of its terms; the Holy Spirit thereby prophetically designing to confound the artifice by which the Doctors of Rome would endeavour, fifteen centuries later, to divide this commandment into two parts, thereby to conceal their culpable retrenchment of the second:—"Thou shalt not make to thee any graven image, nor any likeness — thou shalt not bow down to them, nor serve them." We delight in remarking, moreover, the varied expressions in which the Holy Spirit has recorded the institution of taking bread and wine in remembrance of the Lord's death, which is several times paraphrased, to enable us the better to understand the mind of Jesus Christ, and learn the Spirit's condemnation of the carnal sense which would be given to the words, "THIS is my blood"—"This CUP is the new COVENANT in my blood;" also, "This cup is the COMMUNION of the blood of the new covenant." We would further remark with what prophetic wisdom, in order to confound those who in after times should affirm that Judas took no part in the last supper (that he went out before, or did not enter until it was over), the Holy Spirit has been careful to make known to us, by Mark and Matthew,² that Jesus announced the treason of Judas before the supper, Judas being present; and, by Luke,³ it is announced also after supper, in his presence. We delight in

¹ Deut. v. 21. Exod. xx. 17. ² Matt. xxvi. 21—26. Mark xiv. 19—23. ³ Luke xxii. 19, 23.

observing, in all the writers of the New Testament, the uniform soberness of their language, whenever it is a question of the relations between pastors and churches, and the admirable prudence with which they have always abstained from applying, even once, to the ministers of the christian church the title of *priests* or *sacrificers*, and have only retained for them the title of *elders*, which was given to the laity in Israel, as always distinguishing them from the sacerdotal order (which represented Jesus Christ, and was never to cease until the only and true Priest should appear). We love, too, to magnify that prudence by which no soul is ever directed to any other shepherd or instructor (*καθηγητής*¹) than Jesus Christ; and with which, in recommending deference towards spiritual guides, they are careful always to speak of them in the plural, in order that the Scripture might supply no authority to support the notion, so natural to pastors and congregations, that every soul ought to have *its pastor* among men: "Call no man upon earth your father, and be not ye called master, for Christ only is your master." What precaution is here! what reserve in their narratives, in order never to give too much to man, and "to rehearse all that God had done by the hands of the apostles;"² so that, abasing themselves, all the glory might redound to God, and every servant of the Lord might learn to say, with the last prophet of the Old Testament, and with the first of the New, "He must increase, but I must decrease."

¹ Matt. xxiii. 8—10. ² Acts xiv. 27. Rom. xv. 18. 1 Cor. iii. 6.

We say again, we can scarcely abstain from further quotation, with the Bible before us.

From all these features combined, we are bound to conclude, that if all Scripture is divinely inspired, the historical books are pre-eminently radiant with this divine interference. They more especially show its necessity—they especially attest that it was indispensable that the invisible and all-powerful hand of the Holy Ghost should rest upon the sacred writer, to guide him from the first line to the last. It required more than scholars, more than saints, more than enlightened minds, more than angels and archangels—IT REQUIRED GOD!

We will, therefore, say with Origen, that “the sacred volumes breathe the plenitude of the Spirit; and that there is nothing, either in the law, the gospels, or epistles, which does not descend to us out of the fulness of the majesty of God;”¹—and with St. Ambrose, “Drink from either cup, the Old or the New Testament, because out of both thou drinkest Christ. Drink Christ, that thou mayest drink the blood by which thou hast been redeemed: drink Christ, that thou mayest drink his words.—We eat and drink the sacred Scripture when the strength of the eternal word descends into the recesses of the mind and powers of the soul.”²

¹ *Homilia II. in Jerem. cap. I.* ² “Utrumque poculum bibe Veteris et Novi Testamenti, quia ex utroque Christum bibis. Bibe Christum, ut bibas sanguinem quo redemptus es: bibe Christum, ut bibas sermones ejus.—Bibitur Scriptura sacra, et devoratur Scriptura divina, cum in venas mentis ac vires animi succus verbi descendit æterni.”—*Ambrosius in Psalm. I. Enarratio.*

What ! (it is retorted) are we to believe that the letter of the heathen Lysias, or the address of the Jew Gamaliel, or the speeches of the unfeeling friends of Job, have been inspired words ? Certainly not ! any more than those of Cain, Lamech, Rabshakeh, or Satan. But the sacred writers were as really led of God to transmit them to us, as they were to communicate the joyful theme of Mary in the hill country ; that of the seraphim in the year that king Ahaz died ; or that of the heavenly host at Bethlehem. The Holy Spirit is not constantly the author of the words which are recorded ; but he is invariably the historian.

There is, however, yet another evasion in support of excepting a portion of the Scriptures from *Theopneustia*. If it be not the most serious objection, it is, perhaps, that which is oftenest advanced.

SECTION III.—*Should the apparent Insignificance of certain Scripture Details authorize their Exception from Inspiration ?*

Was it consistent with the dignity of inspiration to be associated with the thoughts of the apostle Paul, even in the trivial details into which we see him descend in some of his epistles ? Would the Holy Spirit go so far as to dictate to him the common salutations with which he concludes them ? —or the medical counsel which he has given to Timothy concerning his frequent indisposition ? —or the commissions with which he charges him respecting his parchments, and a certain cloak that

he had left at Troas with Carpus, when he quitted Asia?

Will the reader here permit us to beseech him to take heed, whenever, with the Bible before him, he does not, at a first perusal, recognise traces of the Deity in any portion of the Word, lest with profane hands he should think to cast out a single verse from the temple of the Scriptures. Your hands hold an eternal book, of which all the authors have said, with St. Paul,—“I think that I also have the Spirit of God.” So long, therefore, as divine features therein pourtrayed are not seen, the fault is in the reader, and not in the passage. Let him rather say with Jacob, “Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not.”¹ It is a book which can bear the light of science, for it will bear that of the last day. The heavens and the earth will pass away, but not one of its words, even the smallest particle of a letter, shall pass away. God himself attests, to every man who shall hear the words of the prophecy of this book, that if any one take away from the words, God will take away his part out of the book of life.²

Let us now examine, somewhat more closely, the passages referred to.

St. Paul, in the dungeon of a prison, asks for his cloak. He had left it with Carpus, at Troas; he begs Timothy to endeavour to come to him before the winter, and not to forget to bring it with him. This domestic detail, which, (since the time of

¹ Gen. xxviii. 16. ² Rev. xxii. 18, 19.

Anomeens, of whom St. Jerome makes mention,¹) has so many thousand times been advanced as an objection against the inspiration of Scripture,—this detail appears to you too trivial for an apostolic pen, or, at least, too insignificant and unedifying for the dignity of inspiration. Unhappy, however, is he who does not discern its touching import!

Jesus Christ also, on the day of his death, spoke of his cloak and vesture. Would you have this passage erased from the number of inspired words? It was after a night of fatigue and anguish: infuriated men had been ruthlessly hurrying him blindfolded about Jerusalem; from street to street, from tribunal to tribunal, by torch-light, during seven successive hours, and striking him continually on the head with their staves: ere sun-rise the following morning, his hands bound with cords, they bring him again into the high-priest's palace, and afterwards before Pilate, in the hall Pretorium: there, lacerated with rods, and streaming with blood, he is delivered to the ferocious soldiery to be put to death: they strip him of his garments, put on him a scarlet robe, spit upon him, place a reed in his hands, and, in mockery of worship, bow the knee before him: then, before placing the cross on his mangled shoulders, they cover his wounds with his own clothes, and lead him forth to Calvary; but when about to proceed to the last act of execution, they, for the third time, strip him of his raiment, and without garment or vesture, stript of every thing,

¹ See *Proemium in Epist. ad Philem.*

he suffers the death of a malefactor on the cross, in the sight of the immense assembly. Was there ever a man under heaven's canopy, who did not find these details soul-moving, sublime, and inimitable? Or one who, from the account of such a dying scene, would retrench, as useless or trivial, a notice of the vesture which was parted, and of the garment for which the soldiers cast lots? Has not incredulity itself said of the Scriptures, that their majesty is astonishing; that their simplicity speaks to the heart; that the death of Socrates was that of a sage, but that of Jesus Christ, of a God?¹ And if divine inspiration had been confined to a portion only of the sacred book, would it not have been for these very details? Would it not have been for the history of that love which, after having sojourned upon earth, more destitute than the birds of the air, and the foxes of the field, had been willing to die yet more wretched still, despoiled of every thing, even of his garment and his vesture,—his naked body, stretched and nailed, like that of a malefactor, to the cross? Ah! be not anxious on the Holy Spirit's account! He has not compromised his dignity. Far from thinking it humiliating to transmit these facts to us, he has even hastened to relate them. More than a thousand years ago, in the times of the siege of Troy, it was the lament of the prophetic lyre of David,—“They look and stare upon me,—they part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.”²

¹ Rousseau's *Emile*. ² Psalm xxii. 18, 19. John xix. 23, 24.

Well, it is the same Spirit who has shown to us St. Paul, winning at Thmucity, and requiring his crown. Hear what he said. The apostle had lost every thing. In his youth he was great among men : favoured by princes, admired of all,—but he left all for Christ. During thirty years and upwards, he had been poor : it became more abundant than others, it stripes above their measure, and in prisons more frequent : of the Jews he had five times received forty stripes, save one ; thrice he had been beaten with rods, once he had been stoned : three times he had suffered shipwreck ; in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils in the towns, in perils in deserts, in perils by sea ; oft in watchings, in hunger, in thirst, and nakedness. These are his own words (2 Cor. xi 23—26). Let us hear him further. He is Paul the aged : in his last prison, at Rome, expecting sentence of death : he has fought the good fight, he has finished his course ; he has kept the faith : but he is suffering from cold, as the winter sets in, and lacks clothing. Thrust into a dungeon of the Mamertine prisons, he bore a name so vile, that even the Christians of Rome were ashamed to acknowledge him ; so that, on his first arraignment, no man stood with him. Ten years before this period, when a prisoner at Rome, and loaded with chains, he had at least received some relief from the Philippians, who, knowing his miserable condition, had, notwithstanding their own need, laid themselves under restraint in order to minister to his wants ; but

now he is altogether friendless, Luke only is with him; he is forsaken of all others, and the winter about to set in. He would need a cloak; he had left his own with Carpus, at Troas, two hundred leagues away; there was no one in the chilly dungeons of Rome to lend him one. Had he not joyfully quitted all for Jesus? Had he not counted all the honour of the world but dung, that he might win Christ? and was he not prepared to "endure all things for the elect's sakes?"¹ We were ourselves, last year, in Rome, at the commencement of November, on a rainy day; and with what vivid reality, under the influence of the evening cold, could we imagine the apostle Paul down in the deep dungeons of the Capitol, dictating the last of his letters, regretting the absence of his cloak, and begging Timothy to bring it before the winter!

Who is there that would now remove from the inspired epistles, so striking and touching a feature? Does not the Holy Ghost thereby introduce us into Paul's prison, to catch a sight of his affecting self-denial, and his poverty? just as he enables us to see, as it were with our own eyes, his earnest love, when a short time previously, writing to the Philippians, he says:—"I weep as I write, because there are many among you who mind earthly things, whose end is destruction." Do we not feel as if we beheld him in the prison, bound with his chain, his tears falling upon the parchment whilst thus writing? Can we not see his poor body; to day ill clad,

¹ Phil. iii. 8.

² Tim. ii. 10.

less, called to mind your brother Paul, shut up in the dungeons of Rome, suffering from cold and lack of raiment, asking for his cloak ! Oh ! how unhappy must he be who is insensible to such feelings, the affecting greatness of such details, the provident and divine sympathy they display, the depth and the charm of such a mode of instruction !—but more unhappy still, he who declares it to be human, because he does not understand it. We would here quote the beautiful language of the excellent Haldane¹ on this verse of St. Paul. He observes, “If the place which this passage occupies in the epistle, and in the solemn farewell of St. Paul to the disciples, be considered, it presents the apostle to our view in the situation of all others the most calculated to awaken the feelings. He has just been arraigned before the emperor ; he is about to finish his days as a martyr ; the hour of his departure is at hand, the crown of righteousness is laid up for him ; and we behold him on the threshold of eternity. Looking at what he is about to leave—doomed to be beheaded like a malefactor, by the orders of Nero ; and to that which he is hastening to possess—crowned as a righteous man by the King of kings, and Lord of lords : on the one hand, forsaken by

¹ *The verbal Inspiration of the Old and New Testament, maintained and established.* By H. Haldane, Esq. Edinburgh, 1830. We are glad of the occasion to recommend to our readers the book of one whose remembrance should be so dear to our churches, and whose short stay at Geneva was productive of so much fruit. We would also indicate, on the same subject, a treatise by Mr. Alexander Carson, entitled, “*The Theories of Inspiration,*” &c. &c. Dublin, 1830. Both these works have been very serviceable to us.

men; on the other, welcomed by angels; now wanting a worthless cloak for a covering; anon covered with the righteousness of saints, 'clothed upon' with his heavenly mansion of light and joy, and every vestige of mortality swallowed up of life."

Oh! rather than object to such passages, and thereby rob the Scriptures of their infallibility, surely we must acknowledge here that wisdom of God, which so often, in a single feature, has known how to communicate instruction to us, without which long pages might have been necessary. We must adore that compassionate condescension which stoops even to our weakness: which has been pleased not only to reveal to us the highest thoughts of heaven in the simplest words of earth; but which, moreover, exhibits them to us in forms so vivid and so touching, often condensing them within some single verse, that we may seize them the more readily.

It is thus that St. Paul, by these words, thrown as it were negligently among the closing commissions of a familiar epistle, sheds a glancing light upon his ministry, and, in a passing remark, enables us to see the character of his whole apostolical life; as a flash of lightning will sometimes in the darkness irradiate the summits of our Alps; or like some persons, who utter their whole soul in a single look.

What striking examples might we not adduce! They crowd upon us, but we must forbear; feeling it rather our duty to take up the particular passages against which objections are advanced.

Before proceeding farther, however, we are constrained to avow, that we are almost ashamed of defending in this way the word of the Lord; and our conscience might well revolt from its character of apology. Is it entirely expedient? and can we pursue it without some irreverence?—We must ever be careful in what manner we defend the things of God, lest we imitate the rashness of Uzzah, who, having extended his hand to stay the ark of God, when the stumbling oxen shook it, thereby kindled the Lord's anger.¹

If it be fully acknowledged on both sides that a word is in the canon of God's oracles, why defend it by human arguments as worthy of him? This, doubtless, may be done to persuade those who are incredulous; but with such as admit the divinity of Scripture, is it not doing injury to the Word; is it not taking a false position, and putting, like Uzzah, a hand to the ark? Does a word present itself to your eyes like a root out of the dry ground, without form or comeliness, or beauty, to make it desirable? You ought still to venerate it, and to wait entirely upon Him who gave it. When it asserts its own claim, are we acting judiciously in endeavouring to prove that respect is due to it? Should I not have been ashamed, when shown my Saviour and my God, rising from supper, laying aside his garment, taking a towel and washing the feet of his disciples,—should I not have shrunk from attempting to prove, that notwithstanding this he was indeed

¹ 2 Sam. vi. 6, 7.

the Christ? Oh! I ought rather to bow lower in adoring him. Just so, the majesty of the Scriptures seeks to descend even unto us! See its rising from supper, laying aside its garments, taking a towel, and kneeling before sinners, to wash their feet! "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me!" Is it not in this very humiliation that it manifests itself to us most attractively, as the voice of the indeed humbled Word? Can we forget all this, and shall we for an instant range ourselves with those who do?

With respect to ourselves, we consider that there is no arrogance comparable to that of the man who, acknowledging the Bible as a book from God, yet pretends to discriminate the pure from the impure, the inspired from the uninspired, God from among what is human! This is to overthrow all the foundations of faith; it is to make it consist, not in believing God, but in believing self. That a chapter, or a word, is part of the Scriptures, should suffice to prove it divinely good; for God has pronounced concerning it, as upon creation, "I have seen all that I have made, and behold all is good." We must never then say, I find this portion admirable, therefore it is from God; and still less, This portion seems useless, therefore it is of man. The Lord preserve us! But we will say, It is in the Scriptures, therefore it is from God: it is from God, therefore it is profitable, wise, and admirable; and if yet I do not see it such, the fault is only in myself. We view the protection which the wisdom

of man would extend over that of God as ill-advised ; we regard as an outrage the defiled impress with which men pretend to legalize the holy Scriptures, and the senseless signature with which they dare to indorse its pages.

If, therefore, we proceed further in the attempt to demonstrate the divine wisdom in some passages, which men have daringly held up as human, it is neither to establish their divine character on the judgment of our better informed wisdom, nor tardily to secure for them respect solely on account of the beauty which they may reveal. Our veneration is established ; it rests upon the fact that the passage is written in the oracles of God. Knowing this, without having seen we have believed. Our only object, therefore, is to refute the objection by some proofs of its rashness. Let us examine, then, two or three other passages to which the honours of inspiration have been denied, because they have, at first view, been considered destitute of spiritual bearing. We can here only refer to a very limited number. It is easy to denounce a sentence as useless or trivial ; but to show that the objection is groundless may require pages.

One of the passages which we have most frequently heard brought forward to justify a distinction between what is inspired in the word of God, and what is not, is the recommendation of Paul to Timothy, respecting the weakness of stomach, and other ailments with which this youthful disciple was afflicted. "Drink not only water, but use a

little wine for thy stomach's sake, and thy frequent infirmities."¹

If, however, we look into this passage, what an admirable and lively revelation do we not find of the greatness of the apostolic vocation, and of the amiability of the christian character! Remark, in the first place, that it is, as it were, in the temple of God that it has been uttered; for immediately before, we have these solemn words:—"I speak to thee in the presence of God and the Saviour Jesus Christ, and of the elect angels, that thou observe these things without prejudice, doing nothing by partiality. Lay hands suddenly on no man; keep thyself pure. Drink not only water," &c. We here see, that it is in the presence of their common Master, and of the holy angels, that St. Paul would address himself to his disciple: let us, therefore, enter into the same temple, in order to understand him, and place ourselves on the same heights, and range ourselves, like him, "before the Lord Jesus and his elect angels;" we should then quickly recognise how much these words reflect the beauty of the apostolic ministry, and the gracious dealings of the Lord towards his servants. The celebrated Chrysostom well understood this, when, preaching from these very words, he remarked, the most useful servants of God ought to be little surprised, if it frequently happen that their Lord judged it expedient to try them, as Timothy, by various bodily infirmities and weaknesses; by some thorn in

¹ 1 Tim. v. 23.

the flesh, or by permitting some emissary of Satan to buffet them, in order, on the one hand, that they might be stirred up to the exercise of sympathy, gentleness, cordial affection, and tender compassion; and, on the other, to patience, self-denial, self-renunciation, and especially to prayer. Reperuse, with seriousness, and by the light of the last day, this beautiful passage of the apostle, and you will have to admire how much precious instruction the Holy Ghost has given to us in the small space of a single verse, above what the pious Jerome has pointed out. How many words, and even chapters, would have been necessary to teach as much in any other form! You there learn besides, for instance, the sobriety of the young and ardent Timothy; he had desired, like St. Paul, to bring his body under in service; he drank only water, and refrained from using wine.—You will there see, also, with what tender and paternal delicacy the apostle reproves either his imprudence or austerity carried too far.—You will there see with what wisdom the Lord authorizes and invites, by these words, his children to take all necessary care of their health; at the same time, nevertheless, that he sees fit to visit them with bodily sickness.—You will see, too, with what prophetic foresight this word, put into the mouth of an apostle, antecedently condemns those human traditions, which, in the lapse of time, would deny to the faithful, as an impurity, the use of wine.—You will there see, sixthly, with what tender solici-

tude, sympathy, and truly paternal vigilance, the apostle Paul, in the midst of his high functions, and notwithstanding the overwhelming care of all the churches (from Jerusalem to Illyria, and from Illyria as far as Spain), kept his eye upon the personal circumstances of his much loved Timothy, and felt for his weakness of stomach, his frequent infirmities, and his imprudent neglect of needful aliment.—And, finally, you will there learn an historical fact, which throws great light upon the nature of miraculous gifts. In spite of all St. Paul's interest for the ailments of Timothy, he had not the power of restoring him to health; not even Paul, who had so often healed the sick, and who had even raised the dead; because the apostles (and we learn it in this verse, as well as by the sickness of Epaphroditus¹) had not received the permanent gift of miracles, any more than that of *theopneustia*; because it was necessary that this power should be renewed to them on each particular occasion.

But if all these lessons of the apostle are important, and if we thus receive them all so briefly, and in a manner so calculated to affect us, oh! how attractive and full of light do they become to a simple Christian's mind, as soon as he is convinced that it is not here the word of a good man, merely; that it is not even that of an apostle, only; but that it is the voice of his God, who would teach him so affectingly, sobriety, brotherly love, a tender interest for the health of others, and the utility of

¹ Phil. ii. 27.

afflictions and infirmities to the most zealous of the servants of God : and who, to teach us all these precious lessons, deigns to address us by the mouth of a frail creature !

We are often assailed in connexion with the salutations with which St. Paul concludes his epistles, and which (we are told) are, after all, but as the vain compliments which we habitually use at the close of our letters. There is nothing (it is added) in these unworthy of an apostle, but neither is there anything inspired. The Holy Spirit has therein left the pen of St. Paul at liberty, that he might give free expression to his personal affection, as a secretary would be left to himself to close, in the usual complimentary style, a letter, the subject-matter of which had been dictated to him. Look, for example, at the last chapter of the epistle to the Romans. Is it not evident that the apostle devotes sixteen verses to the remembrance of his own personal friendships ? Did the dry catalogue of all those individuals require the Holy Spirit's aid ? The apostle mentions eighteen persons by name, without reckoning all those to whom he sends collective salutations in the households of Aquila, Narcissus, and Aristobulus. These verses cannot have required inspiration ; at the utmost, they needed only that oversight of the Spirit of the Lord which was still exercised, even when the sacred writers were left to their own personalities.

We do not shrink from avowing, that it gives us pleasure to review, in this place, these sixteen verses

which have been so repeatedly objected to ; for, on the contrary, they are of the number of those passages in which divine wisdom is conspicuous ; and if you examine them you will soon admire, with us, the exceeding richness, the condescension, and dignity of this mode of instruction ; you will there find, under the most practical and artless form, the living picture of a primitive church ; you will there discover, with lively interest, the relations of its members one with another ; and you will see to what high estimation, the weakest and most ignorant among them could attain within its bosom.

See, in the first place, with what tender interest the apostle recommends to the love of the church at Rome, the humble woman who, from Corinth, it would appear, was journeying into Italy about her temporal affairs. She was a well-beloved sister, who had been devoted to the service of the saints, and who did not fear to open her house to many of the faithful, and to St. Paul himself, notwithstanding the perils of such hospitality. She was the servant of the church at Cenchrea. The brethren at Rome are therefore called upon to receive her in the Lord, and to assist her in whatsoever she has need. See, in what follows, how forcible an example the apostle gives us, in a few words, of that christian courtesy which ought to characterise the mutual relations of the children of God. Admire how, whilst passing so rapidly in review the brethren and sisters of the church at Rome, he remembers to shed upon this "dry nomenclature," as it has

been termed, the refreshing unction of his love! For each one of them, there are a few words of encouragement and tender esteem. He there recalls the generous hospitality of Phœbe; the risking of life on his behalf by Aquila and his companions; the honour of Epenetus, in being the first-fruits of Achaia unto Christ; the "much labour" bestowed on him by Mary; the recollection that his kinsmen, Andronicus and Junia, were in Christ before him; his christian love for Amplias; the evangelical labours of Urbane; the tried fidelity of Apelles; the multiplied labours of Tryphena and Tryphosa in the Lord; and those of the beloved Persis. What an appeal, moreover, to the conscience of every serious reader, is this rapid catalogue! Behold, he should say to himself, the character of the faithful, in the church at Rome, to whom salutations were sent! And if the apostle were to address an epistle to the church in which, for a season, I myself occupy a place, what would he say of me? Would my name have a place in it? Could he add that, like Phœbe, I welcomed the saints to my house?—that, like Aquila and Priscilla, I had meetings of Christians under my happy roof?—that, like Mary, I bestowed much labour on the ministers of the Lord; that I have suffered for Christ, like Andronicus and Junia; that I am a man approved in Christ, like Apelles; that I am elect in the Lord, like Rufus; that I am his fellow-helper, like Urbane; that I am in much service for the Lord, like Tryphena and Tryphosa;

and that I never more depart from the beloved Jesus.

But above all we want a lesson for Christian women to set forth in these admirable verses: In the simple simplicity of the sentences which close the epistle, now he shows them the high character of their vocation. What an important part is assigned them in the church, and what a place in the heavens. Without naming, as yet, even seen the city of Rome, Paul here mentions, by their own names, and as his fellow-labourers, as many as nine or ten women. Besides Phoebe, whom he first commends to them, there is the excellent Priscilla, that happy wife of Aquila, who went so far as to expose herself to the suffering of death for the apostle, and who enjoyed the gratitude of all the Gentile churches: next, one named Mary, who had been very zealous in ministering to the apostles; then Tryphena and Tryphosa, who continued to labour in the Lord: then Persis, who was especially dear to him, and who had laboured much in the Lord; then Julia; then the sister of Nereus, who is perhaps Olympas; and, finally, we have the venerable mother of Rufus. And remark, by the way, with what respect he mentions this lady, and with what delicacy he salutes her with the tender name of MOTHER: "Salute Rufus, elect in the Lord, and his mother and mine!" Is not this an example of the christian courtesy which he had recommended to

¹ This may be the name of a woman; but it is more probably that of a man.

the same Romans in the twelfth chapter of the epistle: "Salute Rufus, elect of God," he writes, "and his mother, WHO IS ALSO MINE!" What a lovely pattern do these verses exhibit to husbands and wives, in the persons of Aquila and Priscilla! You here see them at Rome; you might have seen them, five years previously, driven out of Italy by the emperor Claudius, arriving at Corinth, and receiving into their dwelling the apostle Paul; then, eighteen months afterwards, accompanying him into Asia, and dwelling at Ephesus, where they had a church in their house,¹ and where they assisted, with so much effect, the young and eloquent Apollos, who, notwithstanding his talents, was glad to avail himself of their christian intercourse and love; and now that the death of Claudius had allowed the accession of Nero, you see them scarcely returned to Rome, when they consecrate their new abode to the church of God. It was there that the saints assembled; and you here learn, from a passing expression, that both husband and wife had not hesitated to lay down their own necks for the life of Paul.

But besides all the lessons which are presented to our consciences, in these sixteen brief verses, you may there further learn two facts of paramount importance in the history of the church. And, in the first place, you have the most unintentional and convincing evidence that, at this period, there was no question at Rome either of St. Peter, or of his

¹ 1 Cor. xvi. 19.

episcopacy, or of his popedom, or of his primacy, or even of his presence. Do we not recognise a prophetic foresight in the care which the Holy Spirit has here taken, to do, in this Epistle to the Romans, what is not done in either of the other fourteen of Paul's Epistles—closing it with a long list of the men and women most esteemed, at that time, throughout the church at Rome? We have here the apostle of the Gentiles, twenty years after the commencement of his ministry, writing to the saints at Rome, saluting as many as twenty-eight of them by name, and numerous others by collective designations, yet not sending a word to the Prince of the Apostles, or, as he is styled, the Vicar of Jesus Christ—to his superior, the head of the universal church, and founder of the Roman hierarchy! St. Peter was the apostle of the circumcision, and not of the Gentiles:¹ his post was at Jerusalem; it is there he must be sought; and it was there that St. Paul had always found him. On his first journey, three years after his conversion, Paul there visited him, and remained fifteen days in his house.² On his second journey (to be present at the first council) he again met him there. On his third journey thither, in the year 44, at the period of the death of Herod Agrippa, it was still there that Peter was dwelling.³ On his fourth journey, seventeen years after his conversion,⁴ St. Paul again finds him there, discharging the office (and let this be especially noted) of an apostle, not of the

¹ Gal. ii.² Gal. i. 18.³ Acts xii. 1, 3.⁴ Gal. ii. 7.

Gentiles, but of the circumcision. And when, finally, he is on his fifth and last journey, he writes to the Romans and to the Galatians; and then, in order that the whole church might distinctly know that Peter is not at Rome, and never had been there, Paul takes care to salute by name all those who were most eminent among the saints in that city, even among the women. Where is the bishop of the Latin sect, in our day, who would venture to write an epistle of sixteen chapters to the church of Rome without saying a single word either of the Pope, or of St. Peter, or of a vicar of Jesus Christ?¹

But there is another historical fact yet more interesting, to the knowledge of which these same sixteen verses, which have been termed useless, particularly direct us. We see, in the details of these brief salutations, by what humble instruments, and yet to what an extent, the gospel had been established, in so short a time, in mighty Rome! No apostle had there set foot;² yet, behold what had been accomplished by the unaided labours of travellers, artisans, merchants, women, slaves, and freed men—what progress the word of God had made! Jesus Christ had disciples already in the palaces of the Jewish princes who were attached to the imperial court, and even among the Roman officers who were nearest to the person of Nero. Among those to whom St. Paul first desires his salutations, are “those of Aristobulus’ household;”

¹ See, on this subject, the valuable dissertation of the Pastor Bost—*On the Power of St. Peter in the Church*. Geneva. 1833. ² Rom. i. 11, 13, 14, 15; xv. 22.

and, secondly, "they of the household of Narcissus, which are in the Lord." Now, the first of these was the distinguished brother of Agrippa the Great, and of the immodest Herodias; the second was the powerful favourite of the emperor Claudius, who was not poisoned by Agrippina until the close of the year 54.

Oh! that all who are called Christians would for ever renounce the rash systems in which the words of Scripture are arraigned, and their fitness questioned; in which men dare to prune God's Bible of this word and that passage, to make (at least as far as such words and passages are concerned) a Bible of their own; in which they render themselves responsible for any amount of tampering with the word, which daring commentators may ever venture upon. Why should not others do with an entire book, what you have dared to do with a verse? What idea do they form of the sacred writers, to suppose them capable of the senseless audacity of blending their own decisions with the oracles of the Almighty! We remember a poor idiot, a pensioner of one of our hospitals, whose hand-writing was, nevertheless, so good, that a minister of Geneva employed him to transcribe his sermons. Great, however, was the confusion of the latter when the manuscript was returned, to find that the poor fellow had thought proper to enrich every page by the introduction of his own thoughts. There is, however, far less distance between the idiot and the minister, though the latter should be holy as Daniel,

and sublime as Isaiah, than from Daniel or Isaiah to the Eternal Wisdom.

Having arrived thus far, we would, before proceeding with our argument, recommend to our readers, in the use of sacred criticism, three precautions, of which the doctrine of inspiration will, we trust, make them feel both the importance and necessity.

CHAPTER IV.

ON THE USE OF SACRED CRITICISM, IN CONNEXION WITH THEOPNEUSTIA.

WE would be understood here. Far from us be the thought of expressing the least disfavour towards this useful science. On the contrary, we honour it; we regard it as necessary; we think that all the ministers of the gospel are bound to be acquainted with it; and we believe that the christian church owes to it the deepest gratitude. Sacred criticism is a noble science. It is noble in its object:—it essays to examine the design of the sacred text, its canon, its manuscripts, its translations, its testimonies, and the innumerable multitude who have quoted its words. It is noble in its services:—what triumphs has it not gained over incredulity, what objections has it not silenced, what evil doubts has it not for ever dispelled! It is so in its history:—what eminent men have consecrated to it, either a devoutly laborious life, or the powers of the brightest genius!—Finally,—it is noble in the immensity of its labours, of which no one, who has not studied the subject, can ever have an adequate conception.

May God preserve us from ever opposing faith to science: faith, which lives by truth, to the science which studies it! faith, which mounts to heaven to receive truth direct from the hand of God, to science, which indirectly seeks and often obtains it elsewhere. All that is true in one place, is in pre-established harmony with what is true in another still more elevated. Faith then knows from the first, and before having seen any thing, that all truth will bear its own testimony. All true science, of whatever character, is the friend of faith; but sacred criticism is more than its friend—it is of its own family. However, it is so only as long as it continues true, and preserves its own place. If it overstep these, we must rebuke it; it is then no longer a science, but senseless guess-work; and seeing that in three ways particularly it will be likely to exceed its limits, we have here suggested three precautions to the young who may be engaged in its study.

SECTION I.—*Sacred Criticism occupies the position of an Inquirer, not of a Judge.*

In the first place, critical science no longer maintains its proper sphere, when, instead of standing in its character as an inquirer, it takes the place of judgment; when, not content to gather from the oracles of God, it composes and separates, canonizes and rejects, making itself the oracles! It then tends to nothing less than subverting the very foundations of faith. We proceed to show this.

Devote your reason, your time, and all your intellectual resources, to assure yourself that the book which has been put into your hands, under the title of the Bible, really contains those very oracles of God, of which, under Divine Providence, the Jews were made the first depositaries,¹ and which, under the same guarantee, were, secondarily, confided to the universal church, since the apostolic period. Assure yourself, afterwards, whether this book is complete, or whether transcribers have not altered it. All this is legitimate, rational, and honourable. It has been extensively entered upon by those who have preceded us; and if the investigations of others have failed to satisfy you, renew them, pursue them to instruct us; all the churches of God will thankfully acknowledge your work. But when this labour is accomplished; when you have established the fact, that the Bible is an authentic book; that it bears the authoritative seal of the Most High, and shines with the glory of his own signature; then hear what science and what reason cry; Hear God! then, *sursùm oculi, flexi poplites, sursùm corda!* then, to your knees! and with eyes and hearts uplifted, bow with reverence and humility. Then, Science and Reason have no longer to judge, but to receive: no longer to pass sentence, but to understand. It is still a pursuit; it is still a science, if you will; but it is no longer the same: it is that of intelligence and submission.

¹ Rom. iii. 1, 2.

But if, on the contrary, after having received the Bible as an authentic book, your wisdom presumes to sit in judgment upon its contents; if, from this Scripture, which bears the impress of inspiration, and which declares that it is destined to judge yourself at the last day, you dare to retrench aught; if you would attempt, like the angels at the last judgment,¹ to draw the book of God to the shores of Science, to gather what she deems good into vessels, and to cast away what she refuses as bad, testing the mind of God by that of man: if, for example (to cite but one illustration from a thousand), Science ventures to deny, like Michaëlis, that the first two chapters of Matthew are from God, because she does not approve their scriptural quotations; then to deny the inspiration of Mark, and that of Luke, on the ground that they contradict St. Matthew;² in a word, if she thinks she can reduce this book, recognised as authentic, to be controlled by her ignorance and carnal sense; then must she be rebuked: she has rebelled,—she judges God. Then is science an enormity, to be condemned as much by reason, as it is by faith: this is no longer a science, but a chimera; it no longer clears away the mists which envelope truth, but itself obscures it.

Of this we may judge, if we compare this evil handling of the word of God by theologians, with the more reasonable course by which natural philosophers pursue their investigations. They, at

¹ Matt. xiii. 48, 49.

² Introduction to the New Testament, by Michaëlis, vol. ii. pp. 206, 214. (English Translation.)

least, lay down as an axiom, that all the objects of creation fulfil purposes replete with wisdom and harmony. They apply science, not to contest these designs, or deny this wisdom and harmony, but to develope them. With them, the term "progress of science," is not applied to the rashness which censures the works of God; but to the joy of having explored them, and become better acquainted with their wonders; of having been able to present them, under some new aspect, to the admiration of the world; and of having thus found fresh reasons for continuing to exclaim:—

"How infinitely great!
What harmony divine
Their unity bespeaks."

And why, in regard to the works of God in redemption, do not Christians act upon the same principles as naturalists with the works of God in creation? Why, when even among the heathen, the renowned Galen could say,—that "in describing the various parts of the human body, he spoke a hymn in honour of Him who made it;"—why how is it the Christian does not understand, that to pourtray the various parts of the word of God, is always to "compose a hymn in honour of HIM who indited it?" So thought the apostolic fathers; as, for example, the pious Irenæus, the disciple of Polycarp, and pupil of St. John:—"The Scriptures are perfect (he observes): in them, God always teaches, and man always learns! and thus we hear in the varied tones of their instructions one sweet

symphony which hymns the praise of God, who created all things.¹

Were we told that there existed a thinking people, in which the science of nature, taking a new direction, had commenced extended investigations with the view of proving that there are mistakes in creation; plants ill-constructed, animals badly conceived, ill-adapted organs: what would you think of such a people, and of its labours? Would you say that this would be the advancement of science? Would you not rather think they becloud it, and that they were learnedly labouring to discover the art of ignorance? While anatomists have not been able to explain the use of the liver in the human body, or of the antennæ in that of insects, yet they have not proceeded to arraign nature; they have accused only their own ignorance, and have waited. Why, therefore, when failing to discover the use of a word in the Scriptures, do you impute blame to any but yourselves, and why do you not likewise wait?

This idea is not new; it is now sixteen hundred years since a pious man explained it better than we have done, and preached it with power to the men of his time. We have had the pleasure, whilst writing, to meet with the following passage in one of the Homilies of Origen:—"If ever, in reading

¹ "Sic, per dictionum multas voces, una consonans melodia in nobis sentietur, laudans hymnis Deum qui fecit omnia."—According to the Greek, preserved by Joannes Damascenus:—*διὰ τῆς τῶν λέξεων πολυφωνίας ἐν σύμφωνον μέλος ἐν ᾧ μὲν αἰσθήσεται.* (Adv. Hæreses, book ii. c. 47.)

Scripture, (he remarks,)¹ thou encounterest an idea which becomes to thee a stone of stumbling or a rock of offence, accuse only thyself, (αἰτίω σαυτόν); doubt not that this stone of stumbling and rock of offence has an important meaning, (ἔχειν νοήματα);² and concerning it must the promise be accomplished, ‘Whosoever believeth, shall not be ashamed’ (Rom. ix. 33). Begin then by believing, and thou shalt soon find, under this imaginary offence, *an abundant and hallowed utility*.³ If we have received commandment not to utter vain words, because we shall give account at the last day, how assured should we feel that every word that has proceeded from the mouths of the prophets of God had some end to accomplish, some purpose of utility. I believe, therefore, for those who know how to draw virtue from the Scriptures, every letter in the oracles of God has its end and its work (ἐργάζεται), even to an iota and particle of a letter. And, as among plants, there is not one but has its peculiar virtue; and as it is those only who have a knowledge of botanical science that can tell how each should be prepared, and applied to a useful purpose; so it is, that whoever *is a holy and spiritual botanist of the word of God* (τὸς βοτανικὸς ἔστιν ὁ ἅγιος καὶ πνευματικός), he it is, by gathering up each atom and element, who will find the virtue of that word, and acknowledge that there is nothing in all that is written that is superfluous, (ὅτι

¹ Origenes adamantius Hom. xxxix. In Jer. xlv. 22. ² Πολλὰ ὠφέλει ἂν ἄγιαν. ³ Ἐργάτικον ἦν.

οὐδὲν παρέλκει). Do you wish for another comparison? Each member of our body has its function, for which it has been disposed by the great Architect. Nevertheless, it is not every one who knows its use and adaptation, but those only who have studied anatomy. Well, I regard the Scriptures as *a collection of the plants of the word*, or as *the perfect body of the word*. So that if thou art neither a scriptural botanist, nor anatomist of prophetic words, imagine not that there is any thing superfluous; and when thou hast not been able to discover a reason for what is written, conclude not by arraigning the Bible, but accuse thyself alone."¹ Thus spoke Origen; we might have produced sentiments exactly similar from the writings of other fathers, and particularly in those of Irenæus, who lived still nearer apostolic times.²

Here we cannot refrain from again urging, that this pretension to judge the word of God, subverts the very foundations of faith. It forbids its dwelling in the hearts of any who are at all consistent. This it is but too easy to show.

That a soul may receive life, it is necessary that it should receive faith; that it may have faith, it must believe God; to believe God, it must begin by renouncing the prepossessions of its own wisdom, about sin, about futurity, about judgment, about grace, about self, about the world, about God, and

¹ And he adds :—Τοῦτο μοι τὸ προοίμιον εἶρηται καθολικῶς, χρήσιμον εἶναι δυναμένον εἰς ὅλην τὴν γραφὴν, ἵνα προτράπωσιν οἱ θέλοντες προσέχειν τῇ ἀνάγνωσει, μηδὲν παραπέμπεσθαι ἀναξιεστάτον καὶ ἀνεξερευνήτον γράμμα. ² Irenæus adv. Hæres. book ii. c. 47.

all things else. Is it not written that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God ; that he cannot receive them, for they are foolishness unto him ?"¹ The gospel, therefore, must shock either his reason or his conscience ; perhaps both. Nevertheless, he is bound, on the testimony of God alone, to submit to it ; and it is only in receiving it thus, that it will be found to be " the wisdom of God, and the power of God, unto salvation, to all them that believe." We perceive then that without seeing, he is bound to believe ; that is to say, before he has understood the gospel, it must have confounded his own wisdom, repulsed his natural heart, have blown upon his pride, and condemned his own righteousness. How could men who should unhappily imitate such, and wait until they had approved of all, ere they received all, be ever induced to accept the gospel ? Imbued with such principles, they would impute every thing in Scripture which shocks their carnal sense, to man. They would think they must exclude the *prejudices* of the apostles about the consequences of the sin of Adam, about the Trinity, the atonement ; about eternal punishments, hell, the resurrection of the body ; about the doctrine of evil spirits, election, the free justification of the sinner by faith, and perhaps, also, as to miracles. How could any one, with such thoughts, ever find life, peace, and joy, through faith ? How could he hope against hope ? How could he believe in salvation for a wretch like himself ? He would necessarily pass his days in brooding over

¹ 1 Cor. ii. 14.

vague imaginations, and uncertain doctrines; and his life, his peace, his love, and obedience, would, until death, continue of a character with his doctrines! We conclude, therefore, with this first advice, "Make critical science as an inquirer, and not a judge."

SECTION II.—*Let Sacred Criticism be an Historian, not an Oracle.*

There is, connected with the inspiration of the Scriptures, another caution, not less important, which it behoves us to notice in the employment of science.

The part of sacred criticism is to collect facts connected with the Scriptures; let it not, therefore, lead us into vain hypotheses; it will, in this case, prove most injurious. Science ought to be an historian; do not make her a prophetess. When it assumes the latter character, hear it not; turn your back upon it; you will lose your time, and more than your time. The safeguard of a believer, here, is still in the doctrine of inspiration, such as we have shown it to be; that is, not the inspiration of the men, but of the book.

All Scripture is divinely inspired, is what the authenticated book of the Scriptures declares to us. But we are asked—What was passing in the understanding and conscience of the sacred writer? This is what is scarcely ever revealed to us, and the knowledge of which is not required of us. Ignorance of this great principle has occasioned much loss of time and words. The writing is inspired, whether the author had previous knowledge of what

God was causing him to write, or whether he had not. Let us study, in each book of the Bible, the peculiarities of the style, language, and reasoning, together with all the circumstances of its sacred writers; we shall find nothing but what is valuable in such researches; they are useful, legitimate, and consistent with due respect; and, so far, they come within the limits of science. Let us afterwards endeavour, by these same characters, to fix the date and occasion; we should still see nothing but what was instructive and expedient in such study. It may, for instance, be useful to know that it was under a Nero that St. Paul wrote this precept to the Jews¹—"Be subject to the powers that be;" it may be well to know that St. Peter was married upwards of twenty-three years, when Paul reminded the Corinthians² that this apostle (the first of the popes, as he has been called) took his wife with him in all his apostolical journeyings; and that the other apostles, even St. James himself (who is ranked first among the pillars of the church³) did likewise. This is still science. We highly prize, on behalf of the church of God, every labour which renders any passage better understood by her members; yes, be it but one sentence, or even one word of holy Scripture. But that men should go on to visionary hypotheses, to indulge in a thousand conjectures respecting the sacred writers, to make their words depend upon the chance of their presumed circumstances, instead of considering their circumstances as prepared and designed

¹ Rom. xiii. 1. ² 1 Cor. ix. 5. ³ Gal. ii. 9.

of God for the ends of their ministry ;—that men should subject the nature, quantity, or conciseness of their teachings, to the concurrence, more or less fortuitous, of their ignorances or recollections ; this is to degrade inspiration, and to depreciate the character of the word of God ; it is to lay deeply the foundations of incredulity ; it is to forget that these “ men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost (*φερόμενοι*), not in the words which man’s wisdom taught, but in those taught by the Holy Ghost.”¹

It has been asked, Did the evangelists read each other’s writings ? What matters this to me, if they were “ moved by the Holy Ghost,” and if, like the Thessalonians, I receive their book, “ not as the word of men, but, as it is in truth, the word of God ? ”² This question, put in passing, may indeed be a very innocent one ; but it is no longer harmless, on account of the manner in which it has been treated, and because of the importance assigned to it. And can it ever throw light upon a single passage of the holy books, or more fully establish their truth ? We think not.

Let men imagine whether St. John read the Gospels of the other evangelists ; whether Mark and Luke read Matthew’s Gospel before writing their own (as Dr. Mill³ and Professor Hug⁴ contend they did, but which Dr. Lardner⁵ and Professor Michaëlis⁶

¹ 1 Cor. ii. 13 ; 2 Pet. i. 21. ² 1 Thess. ii. 13. ³ Millii. Proleg. § 108. ⁴ Einleitung in die Schriften des Neuen-Testaments. Stuttgart, 1821. ⁵ Vol. vi. pp. 220—250. ⁶ Introduction, &c. vol. i. pp. 112—129.

deny;)—let them ask whether the evangelists only transcribed with judgment the most important portions of oral tradition, (as Dr. Gieseler¹ would have it);—let them write thereon ponderous volumes in attacking or defending these systems, as if faith and science were really concerned in them, and as if there would result great things for the christian church;—let them affirm that the first three evangelists had consulted some original document, which is now lost, — Greek, according to some, Hebrew, according to others—(as Jean Le Clerc first imagined, and as, sixty years after him, was the opinion of Kopp, Michaëlis, Lessing, Niemeger, Eichhorn, and others; ²)—let men range with even less restraint over this romantic field;—let them even imagine a chain complex as that of the Bishop of Llandaff,³ with his first Hebrew historical proof, his second Hebrew doctrinal proof, his third Greek proof, his fourth proof (a translation of the first); then his proofs of the second class, formed by the translation of Luke, Mark, and Matthew, which at last brings the number to seven, without reckoning three others, peculiar to St. Luke and St. Mark;—or still further, with Veysie⁴ in England, and Dr. Gieseler in Germany, let them derive either the first three Gospels, or the whole four, from apocryphal narrations in previous circulation throughout the christian churches;—let them have it, with

¹ Historich-Kritischer Versuch, &c. Minden, 1818. ² Horne's Introd. vol. ii. p. 443. Edit. 1818. ³ Bishop Marsh's *Michaëlis*, vol. iii. part ii. p. 361. ⁴ Veysie's Examination, p. 56.

the former of these doctors, that Mark has copied them with more literal accuracy than Luke, on account (say they) of his ignorance of Greek; whilst Matthew, at first written in Hebrew, has undoubtedly been translated into Greek at a later period, by a person who modified it from those of Mark and Luke, and who, finally, gave it to us such as we now possess it;—let them have tried these systems not only on some sentences, as a casual research of transient curiosity; but let them multiply ponderous volumes, as if the interests of the kingdom of God were affected. Oh! we are compelled to say it, we feel, in the view of all this science, the most painful emotions. But, after all, is this really science?—Is astrological divination a science? Certainly not. Neither is the learning of which we have spoken. They have abandoned facts; they predict the history of the past; they are the astrologers of theology. In astronomy, a series of observations on the minute satellite discovered near the Georgium Sidus, or upon a “second” of parallax discovered of some star, or upon a simple spot measured on the moon, is regarded as a precious acquisition to science; whilst all the writings of the Count de Boulainvilliers, and the three hundred volumes on the *barbaric* sphere, on the influences, aspects, or horoscopes of the seven planetary bodies, would be regarded only as folly, or a valueless incumbrance. So in the study of sacred criticism, we highly appreciate all that can throw a ray of light more on the least passage in the Scrip-

tures; but of what avail are all these dreaming hypotheses, in which men wander from the luminous paths of science, as well as from those of faith, and weary themselves in quest of nothing? Vain and vaunting labour of idle conjectures, resting upon clouds! From them no good can come. Unhappy studies, which teach to doubt, where God inculcates belief! "Who is this," asks the Almighty, "that darkeneth, by words without wisdom, the counsel of the Most High?"

Would to God that we had here only to lament men's fantasies, and their enormous waste of time. But the consequences are worse: shipwreck has been made of faith; the eyes of the understanding have been dazzled; and young students' feet have been turned aside from the first great Author of the Scriptures. It is manifest that these idle researches could only proceed from a want of faith in the Scriptures. Believe, for a moment; admit that Jesus Christ has given his apostles the *πῶς καὶ τί*, the *what* and the *how*, of that which they were to record; admit that God has caused the life of Jesus Christ to be related, as he has caused them to record his sitting down at his own right hand; and you will immediately feel that all these hypotheses shrink into nothingness. Not only do they not teach you any thing (for they cannot), but they give an unhappy bias to your mind respecting faith; they imperceptibly undermine the doctrine of inspiration; they indirectly weaken the testimony of God, its certainty and perfection; they divert your pious thoughts

from their true course ; they cause youth to wander when seeking to draw living water from the wells of Scripture, and leave them among the burning sands, far from the fountain of eternal life. What, after all, do these systems offer to us ?—Broken cisterns, clouds without water ; at the utmost, perhaps, those imaginary rivulets which the sun of vain-glory will picture to them for a season, like an illusive mirage over the sandy deserts of their natural thoughts.

What would be said of a philosopher, who should pretend to seek from Joseph the carpenter, or in the schools of Nazareth, the interpretation of the sayings and doctrines of Jesus Christ ? Idle and pernicious ! you would exclaim. The same must be said of all those conjectural systems which seek humanly to account for the composition of the Scriptures. Idle and pernicious ! say we. Admit inspiration, and all this labour becomes foolish. The Scriptures are the word of God ; they are dictated by him ; and we know, that “no prophecy of Scripture came by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.”¹ The account of the nephew of St. Paul, warning his uncle in the Antonia prison of the conspiracy, is inspired of God, although Luke may possibly have heard it twenty times from the mouth of the apostle, before he had received it from the Holy Spirit : this account is as much inspired, as what is recorded of the invisible messenger, who smote Herod upon his throne in the town of Cæsarea.

¹ 2 Pet. i. 20, 21.

The history of Jacob's ring-straked and speckled sheep is as much dictated by God, as the record of the creation of the heavens and earth. The account of the doom of Ananias and Sapphira is as much inspired as that of the fall of Satan and his angels.

Yes, doubtless, there was a standard document, according to which these holy men of God spake ; but, as Bishop Gleig has so well observed,¹ this document was none other than the ministry and life of our Divine Saviour. He was their prototype.

When, therefore, we hear it asked :—From what documents did Matthew derive his account of the birth of Jesus Christ ; Luke, that of his early years ; Paul, the Saviour's manifestation of himself to St. James, or the words of the Lord on the blessedness of giving ; Hosea, the tears of Jacob ; and Jude, the prophecy of Enoch, and Michael's contention about the body of Moses ? Let us answer—they obtained them from the source where Moses learned the creation of the heavens and the earth. “The Holy Spirit,” says the illustrious Claude,² “has used the pen of the evangelists and apostles, of Moses and of the prophets ; he instructed them when to write ; and he gave them the desire and the strength for the work. The matter, the order, the method, and the expressions, are by his immediate inspiration and direction.”

We have just shown how a sound apprehension

¹ Remarks on Michaëlis's Introduction to the New Testament, p. 32, and following. Horne's Introduction, ii. 458, edit. 1818.

² Posthumous Works, vol. iv. p. 228.

of the nature of the inspiration of the Scriptures, will shield the young from two considerable errors of modern criticism, and, at the same time, enable them to derive from the science all the benefit which she can bestow. The first of these aberrations, we have said, is to pretend to judge the Scriptures, after having received them collectively, as authentic : the second is, to give way to dangerous speculations upon the sacred books. But we have yet to consider one important relation existing between science and the great question before us.

SECTION III.—*Sacred Criticism is the Doorway of the Temple, not its Deity.*

This reflection will present itself, at once, under the character both of counsel and argument. But we permit ourselves to give the former only, inasmuch as it leads to the latter ; for we do not forget that we have here undertaken to establish Divine inspiration, not to preach it.

Here, in the first place, is our counsel :—

Science is the portico which leads to the temple of the Scriptures : never forget that she is not the deity within it, and that her residence is not within the edifice. In other terms, be careful, when you study sacred criticism, not to carry it beyond its proper boundary, even in its connexion with science ; dismiss it ere you enter the temple. Here then is our argument. If, indeed, you enter the temple of the Scriptures, then, not only will you find it

written by the hand of God, on all its walls, that God fills it, and that he is everywhere ; but you will, moreover, experience the proof of this : you will see him everywhere, you will feel him to be everywhere. That is, when you read attentively the oracles of God, you not only find the frequent declaration of their entire *Theopneustia*, but you receive, through unexpected touches, and often by the power of a verse, or even of a word, a conviction of the divinity which pervades the whole.

With regard to our counsel, it must not be imagined that we have given it for the purpose of depreciating the investigations of science ; on the contrary, we have offered it to assist and carry out these. It happens, but too often, that a prolonged study of the outworks of the sacred book—of its history, manuscripts, versions, language, &c.—so absorbs the attention of those who devote themselves to it, that they become inattentive to its more intimate characters, its import, its aim, the moral power displayed, the beauties disclosed, and the life which flows from it ; yet, as there exists an essential relation between these characters and those which are external, there results, to one so exercised, two grievous evils. As a mortal, his spiritual life is quenched ; and he perils his eternal life (but it is not of this evil that we speak in these pages) ;—as a scholar, he compromises science, and renders himself incapable of a sound appreciation of the very objects with which she is occupied. Alone, science remains incoherent and

crippled, and, thereby, restricted and abased. Can such an one be acquainted with the temple? He has seen only its stones—he knows nothing of the Shekinah! Can he understand the types? He has no intelligence of the antitype—he has seen nothing but the altars, the sheep, the knives, the vessels, the blood, the fire, the incense, the garments, and the ceremonies—he has never seen the redemption of the world, futurity, heaven, and the glory of Jesus Christ! In this condition, he cannot even trace the relations which these external objects have with each other, because he has entirely failed to understand their harmony with the whole.

A learned man, yet devoid of faith, who, in the days of Noah, would have acquainted himself with the construction of the ark, would not only himself have perished, but would have remained in ignorance of a great many of the very objects which he pretended to appreciate.

Take a Roman traveller, in the days of the renowned Pompey, desirous of describing Jerusalem and its temple. Arrived in that city, on the Sabbath-day, he repairs, with a guide, to the Holy Place, walks round it, admires its enormous stones, measures its porticos, informs himself of its antiquity and of the names of its builders; he passes its gigantic portals, which two hundred men opened daily at sun-rise and closed at noon; he sees arrive in order, by thousands, the Levites and singers in their linen garments; and whilst in the interior the sons of Aaron are fulfilling their respective rites—

whilst the Psalms of the royal prophet resound through the vaulted pile, and the chant of thousands take up the chorus of their sublime anthems—whilst the Law is reading, the word being preached, and the souls of those who are waiting for the consolation of Israel, are rapt and elevated with unseen glories, beating with emotion at the thought of Him in whom shall be plenteous redemption—whilst the aged, like Simeon, are looking unceasingly for the salvation of God—whilst sinners are turning to God—while more than one publican is smiting upon his breast, and more than one poor tender-hearted widow cheerfully bringing her two mites into the treasury of God—whilst the many secret, yet ardent prayers ascend to heaven, what is the traveller doing?—He counts the columns, admires the pavement, measures the porch, examines the assembly, sketches the altar of incense, the candlestick, table of shew-bread, and golden censer; then leaves the place, ascends to the battlements of the fortress, descends to the esplanade, or repairs to Kedron; makes the tour of the city walls, numbering his steps, and returns to his inn, where he notes down his observations, preparatory to writing a book. He may unquestionably boast of having seen the people, the temple, and worship of the Hebrews; he will publish his travels, and numerous readers will seek instruction from them; but, even in respect to science, which it was his object to extend, how many false opinions are recorded in them, and how

many errors would be open to the correction of those who worshipped within the temple!

Here then is our advice, given solely for the advancement of science :—on account of the necessary relations which exist between the eternal purposes of the word of God and its external forms, it is imperative to become acquainted with the former, ere a sound judgment can be exercised with respect to the latter.

Would you know the qualifications of a physician, you will doubtless inform yourself of his country, of the universities in which he has studied, and examine the testimonials by which he is recommended : but when he shall come and speak of your most occult ailments, and define to you all the symptoms of your malady, when he shall tell you of feelings, of which, though vaguely felt, you had the conscious reality, and especially when he administers to your lips the only medicine which had ever given you relief ; oh ! then would not such experience bespeak his skill far better than his diplomas ?

Well ! this is the advice which we venture to give to all those of our readers who have acquired any knowledge of sacred criticism :—Read the Bible ; study the Bible in itself and for itself ; inquire, if you will, where it has taken degrees, and in what schools its writers have studied ; but come to its consultations like a sick man eager to be cured ; take as much pains to understand its words, as you would to understand its credentials, its history, and its language ; and then, not only will you be cured

(which is not here the question), but you will be enlightened :—" He that healed me, said unto me, Take up thy bed and walk. Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not ; one thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see."¹

The author would here observe, that he had a thirst for apologetical books during his early studies ; that Abbadie, Leslie, Huet, Turretin, Grotius, Littleton, Jennings, Reinhardt, and Chalmers, were the authors he habitually read ; and that, amidst a thousand doubts, he was eventually convinced and satisfied only by the word of Scripture itself. Scripture is its own witness, not only by its assertions, but by its effects, such as light, heat, life, and health ; for its rays bring health, life, heat, and light. It may be proved to me, by accurate calculations, that at this moment the sun ought to be above the horizon ; but what need have I of this, if my eyes behold it, and my frame is animated by its genial beams ?

Read then the Bible, complete your science by adding this to it. It is the Bible which will convince you ; it is that which will tell you whether it is from God : and when you have heard its voice now more powerful than the noise of mighty waters, and anon sweet and winning like that which greeted the ear of Elijah—" The Lord merciful and gracious, pitiful and of tender mercy, abounding in grace, the God of consolation, the God who pardons abundantly : " oh ! then, we take upon ourselves to affirm it, you

¹ John v. 11 ; ix. 25.

will experience that the simple reading of a psalm, a narrative, a precept, a verse, and even one word of a verse, will more powerfully prove to you the divine inspiration of the entire Scripture, than could the most eloquent and profound among philosophers or books. You will then see, hear, and feel, that God is everywhere in it; you will no longer inquire whether it is throughout inspired, for you will feel it to be powerful and efficacious, "discerning the thoughts and affections of the heart, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow;" causing tears to flow from deep and secret sources, overwhelming you with irresistible power, and restoring you with a tenderness and sympathy which can be found only in God.

What we have here said is only in the way of counsel; but we are about to show in what respect these considerations may be presented, if not as a proof, at least as a powerful presumption, in favour of the inspiration even of the words of Scripture. We will indeed point out to our readers a three-fold experience in it, which has ever produced deep convictions in the hearts of Christians, whose testimony ought at least to appear worthy of the most serious consideration.

Undoubtedly, one of the strongest proofs of the divinity of the Scriptures is that inherent sublimity which fills us with amazement and reverence. It is the imposing unity of this book, composed during a period of fifteen hundred years, by so many

authors, some of whom wrote two centuries before the fabled times of Hercules, Jason, and the Argonauts; others in the heroic days of Priam, Achilles, and Agamemnon; others in the times of Thales and Pythagoras; others in those of Seneca, Tacitus, Plutarch, Tiberius, and Domitian; who all, nevertheless, pursue the same plan, and undeviatingly move forward as if by common consent, to one single transcendent object—the history of the redemption of the world by the Son of God:—it is this vast harmony of the entire Scriptures,—this Old Testament filled with Jesus Christ, like the New; this universal history, uninterruptedly pursuing its onward course, which records the revolutions of empires to the end of time, and which, when the picture of present scenes is finished, carries our view over those of futurity, even until the period when the kingdoms of this world become the possession of Jesus Christ and his saints. At the first page, we have the world created to receive the sinless man; in the following pages, the earth cursed to receive man sinning continually; and in the last page, a new earth, to receive man who will sin no more. At the first page, we have the forbidden tree of life, paradise forfeited, sin entering into the world by the first Adam, and by sin death;—in the last page, paradise regained; life entered into the world through the second Adam; death being vanquished, sorrow and sighs no more seen; the image of God restored in man; and the tree of life in the midst of the paradise of God.

Surely in this sublime whole, which had its beginning ere man was formed, and which continues to the end of time, there is a powerful and altogether celestial unity, developing throughout ages a universal and mighty convergent operation, whose sublimity arrests the mind, surpasses all human conceptions, and proclaims the divinity of its author, as irresistibly as a view of the star-spangled heavens on a summer's night, and the contemplation of all the luminous orbs which circle day and night in the boundless expanse. Myriads of objects in one close band of perfect harmony,¹ said one of the earliest fathers. But besides these beauties which the Scriptures present, we have further to contemplate something not less glorious, which also reveals to us the operation of God in their minutest details, and which attests to us their verbal inspiration.

There are three classes of persons, or rather three kinds of experience, which bear testimony to this :—

1. And, first, if you consult those whose entire lives have been occupied in meditating upon the Scriptures, in order to feed daily the flocks of the Lord, they will tell you, that the more they have devoted themselves to this blessed study, and applied themselves to examine closely the oracles of God, the more their admiration of the letter of Scripture has increased. Surprised often by unexpected beauties, they have recognised even in its least

¹ *Μυρία φύλα καὶ σύμφωνα.* Theophilus ad Autolyc. book i. c. 36. See also Justin Martyr, *ad Græcos Cohort.* c. 8.

expressions, Divine prescience, profound bearings, and spiritual grandeur, which are often brought to light by some slight corrections of the translation, or by a protracted consideration of the details of some single verse. He who has occupied his soul with the study of some text of Scripture, will tell you that soon he has been constrained to use the words of the naturalist, while examining minutely the delicate and wondrous construction of a leaf of the forest. He who made the forest, surely made this leaf, cries the one; and the other exclaims, He who made the Bible, fashioned also the verses.

2. A second order of experience, whose testimony we would also invoke, is that of the interpreters of the prophecies. They will all tell you, as soon as they had devoted some time to the study of the Bible, how manifestly they recognised that, in its miraculous pages, every verse and word, without exception, even to a particle apparently the most indifferent, must have been given by God. The slightest alteration in a verb or adverb, or in the most simple conjunction, might betray the interpreter into very serious error. It has often been remarked, that wherever the prophecies which are now accomplished were misunderstood before the event, it mainly resulted from the details of the text not having been studied with sufficient attention. Of this, we could here cite many instances.

3. But there is yet a class of persons who, if it be possible, attest still more triumphantly the

plenary inspiration of the Scriptures, even in their least details. These are Christians who have felt their power in the first place, in the conversion of their souls, and afterwards in the conflicts which have ensued. Go to the biography of those who were great in the kingdom of God, and see the moment when they passed from death unto life; and interrogate those around you who in their turn have felt this power of the word of God, and they will all render unanimous testimony. When the holy Scripture laid hold upon their consciences, bowed them at the foot of the cross, revealed to them the love of God, that which first arrested them was not the whole Bible, nor a chapter, but a verse; it was, indeed, almost always one word of this verse. Yes, we say one word was to them as the slender point of the connecting wire of some vast battery, or as the penetrating edges of a sharp sword wielded by the hand of God.

They felt it lively and efficacious, searching the thoughts and affections of the heart, "piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow." It was a power from God, concentrated in a single word, which made it become to them "like as a fire, saith the Lord, and like a hammer, that breaketh the rock in pieces."¹ In the moment of their need they had read a psalm, or some words in the prophets, or some sentences in the epistles, or some narrative of sacred history; and as they read, lo! a voice

¹ Jer. xxiii. 29.

sounded in the ear of their consciences with a mighty voice, for conquering and irresistible power. It was not a word of passion: but this word took possession of the soul: souls there, preached there, and revered there. Like the pealing of innumerable bells, calling to fasting and to supplication, are the coming of Jesus Christ! It was only a word: but that word was from God. It was not the sound of the most insignificant of the strings of that heaven-descended harp, but it sounded in union with the heart of man: it produced unexpected thrilling harmony, which excited their every emotion, and they felt that God himself had strung and tuned it: they recognised in it the call of Jesus.

Such is the voice of the church: such through all time has been the unanimous testimony of the saints. The inspiration which the Bible claims for itself (say they) we have acknowledged. We unquestionably believe it because of its own attestation thereto; but we also believe it because we have seen it, and are ourselves enabled to bear witness to it by blessed experience, and an irresistible conviction of its truth.

A thousand similar examples might be adduced. Let us content ourselves by referring here to two of the most distinguished minds that ever served as guides to their fellow men. Call to remembrance in what way light was given to the two greatest luminaries of ancient and modern times; and that it was a single word in the Scriptures, which, at a

moment appointed by God, introduced into their minds the enlightening power of the Holy Ghost.

Luther, whilst yet a monk, was on his way to Rome. He was on a sick bed, at Boulogne, in a foreign land, overwhelmed with the burden of his sins, and thinking himself just about to appear before God. It was in this condition that the seventeenth verse of the first chapter of Romans—*justus ex fide vivet*,—"The just shall live by faith," came to irradiate his whole being, as it were, with heavenly light. This single word twice fastened upon his mind with irresistible power: in the first place at Boulogne, where it imparted to him strength and unspeakable joy; and afterwards in Rome itself, to arrest and raise him up, whilst with an idolatrous multitude he was on his knees, dragging his body up the fabled staircase of Pilate. This word was the commencement of the Reformation of the West. "Creative word, both for the Reformer and the Reformation (emphatically observes my beloved friend, Merle d'Aubigné), it was by it that God then said, 'Let there be light, and there was light.'"¹ In truth, says the Reformer himself, I felt myself entirely re-born, and this word was to me the true gate of paradise. "*Hic me prorsus renatum esse sensi, et apertis portis in ipsum paradysum intrasse.*"²

Shall we not here be reminded, further, of the greatest among the learned of christian antiquity

¹ Preface to the History of the Reformation, vol. i. p. 210.
Luther, Opp. Lat. in Præf.

(the excellent Augustine), who, lying in his garden near Milan, dejected, without peace, feeling like Luther a tempest in his soul, prostrate under a fig-tree, "*jactans voces miserabiles, et dimittens habenas lacrymis*," groaning and weeping bitterly, he heard from a neighbouring house a youthful voice singing, and rapidly repeating by way of chorus, "*Tolle, lege! Tolle, lege!*"—"Take and read! Take and read!" He had just recovered the scroll of Paul's epistles, which he had left near Aleppo (*adripui, aperui et legi in silentio*); he seizes it, opens it, and reads in silence the chapter which first meets his eye; and when he comes to the thirteenth verse of the thirteenth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, all was decided by one word. Jesus had conquered, and the great career of the most holy of learned men then commenced. One word, but a word from God, had lighted up the brilliant beacon, whose lustre was to extend over ten centuries of the church's existence, and whose light cheers her even now. After thirty-one years of rebellion, conflicts, relapses, and wretchedness, faith, life, and peace, had descended into this soul of love; a new day, an eternal day, had opened upon him.

Having read these words, he desired no more; he closed the book; all doubt (he observes) was dispelled—"Nec ultra volui legere, nec opus erat;" for "with the close of this sentence, a stream of light and security was poured upon his mind, and his long night of doubts and fears had passed

away."—" *Statim quippe cum fine hujusce sententiæ, quasi luce securitatis infusâ cordi meo, omnes dubitationis tenebræ diffugerunt.*"¹

There is yet one other experience of the same character, which we esteem too striking to pass over, although its testimony may be lightly esteemed, except among those who already believe. The further an individual advances in the christian life, and receives a more abundant measure of the Spirit of God, the more remarkable will be the character of opposition which on the one hand the Scripture, and on the other, the most esteemed writings of men, will assume in his mind. He will be observed to be increasingly independent of the works and words of men, because he has learnt that they can yield him no further instructions, or that, at least, after a single perusal, there remains nothing to receive. How blessedly otherwise is it with the Scriptures; how contrasted the attention he will pay to them; ever more and more convinced of the wisdom they reveal, and of their divine power,—ever increasingly affected by their smallest word,—ever better able to feed upon and enjoy, by day or by night, their single passages and fragments. There is, in this fact, for those who can appreciate it, much that is impressive and interesting.

Such is then the triple testimony which we would invoke, and by which the church attests to us, that there is energy from God pervading the very least

¹ Confessions, book viii. ch. xii.

details of the holy word, and that the whole of Scripture is divinely inspired.

We are, however, anxious to be rightly understood. In making this appeal, we do not pretend to impose upon others the experience of some.

Evidences which result from feelings are, we are aware, only evidences to those who have felt them. These have doubtless an irresistible power with those who, having experienced them, have thus seen the testimonies of the word of God evidently confirmed; but nothing could be less logical than to present them as demonstrations to those who are as yet strangers to them. If you had enjoyed these experiences, you would already be more than convinced, and we should have nothing further to tell you. We have only therefore presented them to you as strong historical presumptions, thereby to dispose you to receive with a readier submission the scriptural proofs which we shall presently place before you. A numerous multitude of instructed and pious people, we say, attest to you, through past ages, by a varied experience, that in studying the word of God, they have been led to acknowledge the manifest inspiration of Scripture, even in its least details: let this, at least, serve as a powerful recommendation to listen with respect and without prejudice to the testimonies to its own character which the Bible itself contains. These testimonies we are about to produce; but meanwhile we desire that at least this voice from the church may resemble the cry from a neighbouring house—*Take*

and read! Take and read! Go, and take your Bible;
adripe, aperi, lege in silentio! read it in solitude!
and you will yourself feel how far its inspiration
extends; and you too will say, like Augustine, I
doubt no more; for the day-star has risen in my
heart!

CHAPTER V.

DIDACTIC SUMMARY OF THE DOCTRINE OF THEO- PNEUSTIA.

WE have been defining and refuting: it remains for us to offer our proofs; but we appeal solely to the word of God, which alone can furnish them. If God reveals himself, it is for him to tell us, in that revelation, in what measure he has vouchsafed to do so. Far from us be vain hypotheses! they would contain nought but our own conceits, to dazzle the eye of our faith. What say the Scriptures? is the sole question.

It has been asked, whether the Bible is inspired even in its language? We have affirmed this. In other terms, (for we have voluntarily reduced our thesis to this second expression, as equivalent to the first,) it is demanded whether the men of God have given us the Scriptures exempt from all error, either important or unimportant, positive or negative? We have affirmed this.

The Scripture is composed of books, consisting of sentences and words. Without entering into any

conjecture as to the manner in which God was pleased to dictate both the one and the other, we contend, with Scripture, that this word, without any exception, is from God. And if any one inquire of us, by what method God dictated all the words of his book to the sacred writers? we would wait ere answering him, until it should be made known to ourselves in what way he had communicated to them its ideas; and we would call to mind the child who said to its parent, "Father, where did God get the colour to make cherries so beautifully red?" "My child, I will tell you, as soon as I have been informed how he tinged all the leaves with so beautiful a green." This fully comprises our argument.

But what have we done to establish this? We have not yet proved it: it is the Bible only which must do this. Let us examine then the progress of our argument.

SECTION I.—*Retrospective View.*

To demonstrate the doctrine more clearly, we have judged that, before entering upon the proofs, it would be useful to have examined the various objections which have been raised against the doctrine, and the hypotheses by which many have often desired to set it aside. In order to this, we have been especially anxious to indicate with precision the primary error of all these false systems, by which inspiration is evaded, under pretence of explaining it. We have said that it is the book

which is inspired ; it is with the book we have to do, and not with the writers. Belief in the inspiration of the thoughts might be dispensed with, whilst we may not dispense with the belief of that of the language. If the words of the book are dictated by God, of what consequence to me are the thoughts of the writer ? He may have been dull of understanding ; but that which came from his hands would still be the Bible ; but if the thoughts only are supplied to him, and the words be not, it is not a Bible which he gives me—it is little more than a sermon.

We have nevertheless been very careful to make our reservations. The Scripture is entirely the word of man, and it is also wholly the word of God ; and here it is especially that we have to admire it. It has spoken for us, and like us ; it has stood before us, invested with humanity ; the Eternal Spirit (in this respect, at least, and in a certain measure) has become man to speak to us, as the Eternal Son became man to redeem us. It was for this end that he has, from eternity, made choice of men “subject to like passions as we are.”¹ For this, his foresight was exercised, and he prepared their character, circumstances, style, method, time, and course. And herein it is that the gospel exhibits the tenderness and the sympathy of God, as much as it is (according to Paul), “the wisdom and the power of God.”

¹ James v. 17.

We were, however, bound to review the objections.

The individuality of character of the sacred writers, so constantly manifest in the Scriptures, has been especially insisted upon, as if on this account their inspiration were necessarily intermitting, imperfect, and intermingled with the fallible thoughts of human wisdom. Far from having overlooked the fact, thus perverted into an objection, we have adored the wisdom as well as the goodness of God in connexion with it. But of what consequence, to the fact of *Theopneustia*, is the absence or the occurrence of the emotions of the sacred writer? God might either employ or dispense with them. When he speaks to us, must he not do so in the manner and style of men? And if the Almighty employ second causes in all his other works, why not in that of *Theopneustia*? We have said, moreover, that the individuality objected to, equally pervades the parts of Scripture most incontestably dictated by God. This system of a gradual and intermitting inspiration presents at once features of complication, rashness, and puerility; but what especially condemns it is, that it is directly contrary to the testimony which the Scripture has borne to its own character. But let it not be thought, that in making use of this personality, it has been done by chance: no, all its various writers were chosen before the foundation of the world, for the work to which they were destined, and God prepared them for it (like St.

Paul) from the womb. Oh! how admirable in this respect are the holy books! how incomparable! and herein how manifest and abundant is the Divine power which caused them to be written!

Some persons, further, have opposed to us the necessity of translations and their inevitable imperfection; others the numerous variations which exist in the ancient manuscripts from which our Scriptures were necessarily printed. We have replied, that these two facts could in no wise affect the question—the question referring to the primitive text. Were the apostles and prophets charged to give us a Bible entirely inspired, and without the mixture of any error? That is the question. But, at the same time, we have been enabled to rejoice with the church, at the condition in which our manuscripts are found, and at the amazing insignificance of the variations. The providence of God has watched over this inestimable treasure.

A further objection was taken against the inspiration of the words, on the ground that the apostles had quoted from the Septuagint, in the New Testament; but we, on the contrary, have shown that, in the independent and absolute manner in which they have used it, we have another proof of the presence of the Spirit who caused them to speak.

Finally, some have gone so far as to object that after all there are errors in the Scriptures; and these imputed errors they have cited. We have denied the fact. Because, not having at first view understood some narrative or sentence, they have at

once arraigned the word of God. We sought to give some examples of the rashness and error of these imputations; but at the same time were anxious to take up this objection, in order to show to those who present it, that they could not attack the inspiration of the language, except by imputing error to the mind of the Holy Ghost. What rashness is here! Whilst, perhaps, saying of the Bible, with Pilate, What evil hath it done? it has been profanely placed at the bar of their own tribunal! What will you object then to those who buffeted and spat upon him, saying, "Prophesy, who is he that smote thee?" Oh! come down from your judgment-seat, come down!

Erroneous expressions were also imputed to the language of Scripture, which, it was argued, betrayed an ignorance on the part of the sacred authors, otherwise very pardonable, of the constitution of the heavens and the phenomena of nature. But here, as elsewhere, the objections, when looked into, are changed into subjects of admiration; for, in compelling us, by a more attentive examination, to lay bare the gems of holy Scripture, their lustre has lit up new splendours, which have led us to fresh discoveries of more brilliant reflections of its divinity. At the same time that we cannot find in the Bible any of the errors which abound in the sacred books of heathen nations, and in all the philosophical systems of antiquity, that holy book exhibits in a thousand places in its language the knowledge of the "Ancient of Days;" and it must speedily constrain

its readers to acknowledge, either by the expressions it employs, or by those it avoids, that its language during thirty centuries was in well-known and profound harmony with the eternal truth of the facts it records. "What thou hast learnt during the last few days, I will not (saith the Bible) speak to thee about; but I knew it all from eternity."

There are also objections raised against the words of St. Paul, in which that apostle distinguishes what the Lord said, from what he himself utters. We believe we have shown that, on the contrary, he could not give a more convincing proof of his inspiration, than the boldness of such a distinction conveys; since, with an authority purely divine, he has just before revoked certain laws laid down in the Old Testament.

But this was not yet all; we were under the necessity of answering other objections, which rather presented themselves in the character of systems, and would pretend to exclude from inspiration a portion of the word of God. The authors of these schemes would sometimes admit the inspiration of the sentiments of the Bible, and only contest that of its language; but, in the first place, we have shown that there exists so necessary a dependence between the sentiments and the words, that a complete inspiration cannot be conceived of the former without the plenary inspiration of the latter. We desired to produce a conviction of the irrationality of such a conception; and on this account we have referred to this delusion, since, as soon as its defence was

attempted, it was found at once necessary to attack the sentiments, as well as the language of Scripture, and to impute errors to the sacred writers.

We also denounced this fatal system to be nothing more than a mere human hypothesis, assumed without any thing in the Scriptures to authorize it, and, as we said, inevitably leading to an entire contempt for the word of God; whilst at the same time these notions did not after all, in our opinion, solve any difficulty, but only replaced one inexplicable operation of God by another not less so.

But, further, we asked to what end does such a system serve, since it is incomplete, and by the admission even of its supporters only affects a portion of the Scriptures?

Others would sometimes be willing to concede to us the plenary inspiration of certain books, excluding however from it the historical portions. But besides that all distinctions of this nature are gratuitous, rash, and opposed to the tenor of the Scriptures, we have endeavoured to show that the inspiration of these very books is, perhaps, of the whole Bible the most fully attested, the most necessary, and the most evident; they are those which the Lord Jesus Christ has cited with especial deference; which probe the heart and disclose the secrets of conscience. In their least details, they prophesy of the most important future events; they constantly set forth Jesus Christ; they describe the character of God; they instruct, they legislate, and they reveal. They are resplendent with divine wisdom,

both in what they say, and wherein they observe silence : in their prophetic reserve, in their sublime moderation, in their fulness, in their variety, and in their conciseness. To write these, we observed, more than men, and more than angels was required.

We were asked, finally, if we could see any traces of the Divinity in certain passages of the Scriptures said to be too trivial to be inspired? We think that in opposition to this view, we have successfully shown how rich in wisdom are the passages in question ; when, instead of hastily rejecting, we have sought to understand them by the teaching of the Holy Ghost.

Then we have entreated our reader to go at the study of the Scriptures themselves and prayerfully to devote to their study about the time he has usually spent in judging them : and we have assured him, on the testimony of the whole church, and on a threefold experience, that the Divine inspiration of the least details of Holy Scripture would be soon apparent to him, when he knew how to study those details with reverence.

It has been our desire that this treatise should not bear so abstruse a theological character as that christian females, or individuals not having pursued any regular course of study, and who may not be acquainted with the sacred languages, should hesitate to undertake its perusal. Nevertheless we should fail in one part of our aim if the doctrine were not in some points set forth with precision. We will, therefore, (in order to avoid

being betrayed under another form into lengthened explanations,) attempt here to develop the argument in a more didactic manner, and to recapitulate it in a brief series of questions and replies. We will not prolong this portion much, but shall refrain from doing more than indicate the position of the points which have been already treated of, and enlarging a little on those which have not yet been mentioned.

SECTION II.—*Brief Catechetical Essay on the principal Points of the Doctrine.*

1. What must be understood by *Theopneustia*?

Theopneustia is the mysterious power exercised by the Spirit of God upon the authors of holy Scripture, causing them to write it, and guiding them in writing it, even to the application of the words which they have used, in order to preserve them from all error.

2. What does the Scripture say of the spiritual power acting upon the servants of God, whilst they were writing the sacred books?

It is said that they were *moved*, or *instigated*, (*φερόμενοι*,) not by the will of man, but by the Holy Ghost; so that they propounded the things of God, "not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth."¹ God, (says the apostle,) ² spake BY THE PROPHETS at "sundry times and in divers manners," (*πολυ-*

¹ 1 Cor. ii. 13; 2 Pet. i. 21.

² Heb. i. 1.

μερῶς καὶ πολυτρόπως); sometimes in giving them an understanding of what he dictated to them, and sometimes without doing so; sometimes by dreams¹ and visions,² which he afterwards caused them to make known; sometimes by words inwardly given (λόγῳ ἐνδιάθετῳ,) which he caused them forthwith to utter; and sometimes by words heard from without (λόγῳ προφώρικῳ), which the Spirit caused them to repeat.

3. But what was passing in their hearts and understandings while they wrote?

We cannot tell. This fact which is, moreover, susceptible of extensive modification, cannot become an object either for our science or our faith.

4. Have not modern authors who have written on this subject often distinguished three or four degrees of inspiration,—superintendence, adaptation, prudence, suggestion,—in the Scriptures?

It is all vain conjecture, and this supposition is in contradiction to the word of God, which recognises but one character of inspiration. There is nothing true herein but the *suggestion*.

5. Do we not, however, see that the men of God were well instructed, and often even deeply affected by the sacred things which they taught, the things future, which they predicted, and the things past, which they recorded?

¹ Numb. xii. 6; Job xxxiii. 15; Dan. i. 17; vii. 1; viii. 1; Gen. xx. 6; xxxi. 11; 1 Kings iii. 5; Matt. i. 20; ii. 12, 22; Acts ii. 17. ² Numb. xii. 6; xxiv. 4; Job vii. 14; Gen. ii. 21; Psalm lxxxix. 19; Matt. xvii. 9; Acts ii. 17; ix. 10, 12; x. 3, 17, 19; xi. 5; xii. 9; xvi. 9, 10; 2 Cor. xii. 1, 2.

They might undoubtedly be so,—indeed they were so generally,—but it was not necessary that they should be so; and when they were, it was in varied proportions, the degree of which remains unknown to us, and the knowledge of which is not required of us.

6. What must we think of those definitions of *Theopneustia* which seem to represent the Scriptures as the purely human expression of a revelation entirely divine;—that of Baumgarten,¹ for instance, who says that inspiration is only the means by which revelation at first immediate, becomes mediate, and is set forth in a book (*“medium quo revelatio immediata, mediata facta, inque libros relata est”*)?

These definitions are not exact, and may give rise to false notions respecting *Theopneustia*.

I say that they are not exact: they contradict the facts. Immediate revelation does not necessarily precede inspiration, and when it does so it is not the measure of it. The voice of prophecy has come forth from the viewless air;² a hand coming forth from the wall, has written words from God;³ a dumb animal has fulfilled his will, and rebuked the madness of a prophet.⁴ Balaam prophesied without desiring to do so; Daniel, without understanding what he prophesied; and the disciples at Corinth, without even knowing the words which the Holy Spirit put into their mouths.⁵

¹ *De discrimine revelat. et inspirationis.*

² Gen. iii. 8—20; iv.

6—15; Exod. iii. and xix; Deut. iv. 12; Matt. iii. 17; xvii. 5.

³ Dan. v. 5.

⁴ 2 Pet. ii. 16.

⁵ 1 Cor. xiv.

I said, further, that these definitions gave birth to, or involved, false notions of *Theopneustia*. They suppose, in fact, that inspiration would only be the natural expression of a supernatural revelation; and that the men of God themselves would only have had humanly to record in their books what the Spirit had divinely given them to see in their understanding. Inspiration, however, is more than this. The Scripture is not only the expression of the mind of God, elaborated by the mind of man, to be promulgated in the words of man; but it is the mind of God, and the word of God.

7. The Holy Spirit having, through all time, enlightened the elect of God, and having, moreover, in times of old, endowed them with miraculous powers, in which of these two orders of spiritual gifts must we rank *Theopneustia*?

It must be ranked in the order of extraordinary and altogether miraculous gifts. The Holy Ghost has ever enlightened the elect by his mighty and indwelling power; testified to them of Jesus;¹ conferred an unction from the Holy One; taught them all things; and led them into all truth.² But, besides these *ordinary* gifts of enlightenment and faith, the same Spirit has conferred *extraordinary ones* on the men commissioned to write and promulgate the oracles of God. *Theopneustia* is one of these latter gifts.

8. Is then the difference between enlightenment and *Theopneustia* in kind, or only in degree?

¹ John xv. 26.

² 1 John ii. 20; John xiv. 16—26; vii. 38, 39.

The difference is in kind, and not alone in degree.

9. Did not the apostles nevertheless, besides *inspiration*, receive *enlightenment* from the Holy Ghost in an extraordinary measure, and in its most eminent degree?

In its most eminent degree, is what no one can affirm; in an extraordinary degree, is what none can contradict.

The apostle Paul, for instance, did not receive the gospel from any man, but by a revelation from Jesus Christ.¹

He wrote ALL HIS EPISTLES, St. Peter tells us, not only in words taught by the Holy Ghost, as were the other Scriptures (of the Old Testament), but according to the wisdom which had been given unto him.² He had the knowledge of the mystery of Christ.³ Jesus Christ had not promised to give his disciples "a mouth" only, but "wisdom" also, to bear testimony for him.⁴ David, when he seemed to speak only of himself, KNEW that it was of the Messiah that he must understand his words—"Because he was a prophet, and knew that of his loins, according to the flesh, God would raise up Christ to sit upon his throne."⁵

10. Why then should it not be said that *Theopneustia* is only enlightenment, to the most eminent and abundant extent?

Let us be cautious in concluding thus; it would

¹ Gal. i. 11, 12; 1 Cor. xv. 3. ² 2 Pet. iii. 15, 16. ³ Eph. iii. 4.

⁴ Luke xxi. 15. ⁵ Acts ii. 30.

leave us only a narrow, confused, contingent, and always uncertain idea, of inspiration. In fact—

(1.) God, who has often united both these gifts in one person, has also been pleased often to separate them, to make us understand that they differ essentially from each other, and that, when united, they are independent. Every true Christian has the Holy Ghost,¹ but every Christian is not inspired; and the man who communicates the words of God, may never himself have received either the affections or light of life.

(2.) It is demonstrable, by numerous examples, that one of these gifts is not the measure of the other; and that the *Theopneustia* of the prophets was not proportioned to their understanding, any more than to their sanctity.

(3.) So far from one of these gifts being the measure of the other, it may even be said that *Theopneustia* appears the more radiant in proportion as the enlightenment of the sacred writer continues behind his inspiration. When you see the most enlightened prophets of God, bending over the pages which they had written, seeking to understand the sense of what the Spirit which was in them had caused them to express,² it ought to be evident to you, that their *Theopneustia* was independent of their enlightenment.

(4.) In supposing even the enlightenment of the prophets elevated to its highest degree, it nevertheless never reached the altitude of the Divine

¹ 1 Cor. vi. 19; Jer. xxxi. 34.

² 1 Pet. i. 10—12.

mind; and there may have been in the word dictated to them, much more meaning than as yet was discernible to them. David, doubtless, when rehearsing his Psalms, knew that they designated Him who should be born of his loins, to sit upon his throne for ever;¹ most of the prophets, like Abraham their father, saw the day of Christ, and were transported with joy;² they were "searching to understand what the Spirit in them had testified of the sufferings of the Messiah, and the glory that should follow;"³ nevertheless our Lord attests to us, that the least (in knowledge) in the kingdom of heaven, knows more thereof than the greatest of the prophets.⁴

(5.) These gifts differ among themselves in essential features, which we shall presently set forth.

(6.) Finally, it is always the inspiration of the book which is presented to us as an object of faith, and never the inner state of him who wrote it. His knowledge or ignorance in nothing affects the confidence which I owe to his words; and my mind ought ever to be directed, not so much to his endowments, as to the God of all holiness who speaks to me by his mouth. The Lord, it is true, has designed that most of his historians should also be witnesses of what they recorded. This was, no doubt, that the world should hear them with more confidence, and that no reasonable doubts might be cast upon the truth of their records. But the

¹ Acts ii. 30. ² John viii. 56. ³ 1 Pet. i. 11. ⁴ Matt. xi. 11.—
Michaëlis, Introduction, vol. i. p. 116—129, French translation. This
author thinks that *the least* in this passage, signifies *the least prophet*.

church, in her faith, looks far higher; the endowments of the writers are imperfectly known, and comparatively indifferent to her; what she knows is their inspiration. She never, however, seeks for its source in the bosom of the prophet, but in that of her God. "Christ, speaking in me," is the language of St. Paul; and "God spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets."¹ "Why look ye so earnestly on us," say to her all the sacred writers, "as though by our own power or holiness"² we had done this work?—Look on high!

11. If, therefore, between the two spiritual graces of enlightenment and inspiration, there exist a specific difference, in what will it be said to consist?

Though you should find yourself entirely unable to explain this, you would not be less obliged by the preceding reasoning to avow that this difference exists. To be enabled fully to meet this question, it would be necessary that you knew the nature and the mode of both the one and the other of these gifts; but the Holy Ghost has never explained to us, either how he conveys the mind of God into the understanding of a believer, or how he places the words of God in the mouth of a prophet. We can, however, here designate two essential features by which these two operations of the Holy Spirit have always shown themselves distinct—one of which relates to their duration, and the other to their extent.

With respect to duration, the enlightenment is

¹ 2 Cor. xiii. 3. Heb. i. 1. (ἐν).

² Acts iii. 12.

continuous, whilst the inspiration is intermittent. With regard to extent, enlightenment has its degrees, but inspiration does not allow of any.

12. What is meant by saying that enlightenment is continuous, and inspiration intermittent?

The enlightenment of a believer by the Holy Ghost is a permanent work. When it has commenced for him the day of his new birth, it goes on increasing, and lights him onward to the end of his course. This light, undoubtedly, is but too much obscured by his unfaithfulness and negligence; but it is never utterly withdrawn from him: "his path," says Solomon, "is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."¹ "When it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, to reveal his Son in me"²—he preserves unto the end the knowledge of the mystery of Jesus Christ, and can always show forth its truth and glory. As it is not flesh and blood which have revealed to him these things, but the Father,³ this unction which he has received from the Holy One⁴ dwells in him (says St. John); and he has no need that any teach him, but as the same anointing teaches him all things, and is truth, and is no lie, so even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in it. Enlightenment, therefore, abides with the believer; but not so with miraculous gifts, nor with *Theopneustia*, which is one of these gifts.⁵

¹ Prov. iv. 18. ² Gal. i. 15. ³ Gal. i. 16. ⁴ 1 John ii. 20—27.

⁵ 1 Cor. xiv. 1.

With regard to miraculous gifts, these were always intermittent among the servants of God ;— Jesus alone was excepted, “ who received not the Spirit by measure.” The apostle Paul, for instance, who at one time restored Eutychus,¹ and through whom God wrought extraordinary acts of power,² so that it sufficed to apply the handkerchiefs or aprons, which had touched his body, to the sick, and they were healed ; at another time could not relieve either his fellow-helper, Trophimus, his beloved Epaphroditus, or Timothy.³ It is the same with *Theopneustia*, which is only the most excellent of miraculous gifts. It was only occasionally in exercise in the prophets of the Lord. At intervals the prophets, and even the apostles, who (as we shall show) were prophets, and more than prophets,⁴ did not prophesy as often as they desired to do so. *Theopneustia* was supplied to them intermittingly ; it came to them just as the Spirit willed they should receive it (καθὼς τὸ Πνεῦμα ἐδίδου αὐτοῖς ἀποφθεγγέσθαι) ; for, “ no prophecy, (St. Peter tells us,) is of the will of man ; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.”⁵ “ God,” says St. Paul, “ spake by his prophets” (ἐν τοῖς προφήταις) when he pleased, at sundry times (πολυμερῶς), and in divers manners” (πολυτρόπως). It is, also, often written, that, on such a day, and at such a time, the word of

¹ Acts xx. 10. ² Acts xix. 11, 12. ³ 2 Tim. iv. 20 ; Phil. ii. 27 ; 1 Tim. v. 23. ⁴ Eph. iii. 4, 5 ; iv. 11 ; Rom. xvi. 25, 27 ; Acts ii. 4.
⁵ 2 Pet. i. 20.

Jehovah came to such a man (יְהוָה דָּבַר יְהוֹשֻעַ אֵלָיו); viz. "In the tenth year, in the tenth month, in the twelfth day of the month, the word of the Lord (says the prophet¹) came unto me, saying." Again: "In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, the word of the Lord came unto John, the son of Zacharias (ἐγένετο ῥῆμα Θεοῦ ἐπὶ Ἰωάννην²); and on the eighth day, Zacharias his father was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying," &c.³

Thus, therefore, it must not be conceived that the divine infallibility of the language of the prophets (and also of the apostles) was extended beyond the period in which their miraculous task was accomplished, and in which the Spirit caused them to speak. In the absence of *Theopneustia*, they were enlightened, sanctified, and preserved of God, as may still be said in our days of the saints and faithful; but then they spake no longer as "moved or instigated by the Holy Ghost." Their language would, doubtless, be worthy of the most respectful attention; but it was a saint who spoke, and no longer God; they had again become fallible.

13. Can there be cited any examples of the fallibility which attached to their language in the absence of *Theopneustia*?

Such examples are multiplied. We frequently see men who for a season had been the mouth of the Lord, become afterwards false prophets; and after that the Spirit had ceased to speak in them,

¹ Ezek. xxix. 1, and elsewhere. ² Luke iii. 1, 2. ³ Luke i. 59, 67. See also verses 41, 42.

pretend, with a lying spirit, to utter the words of Jehovah, although he "sent them not, neither commanded them, neither spake unto them." Therefore, "they prophesy unto you a false vision, and the deceit of their own hearts."¹

Without here dwelling upon those who were guilty of this impiety, and merely referring to the profane Saul, and covetous Balaam, who were for some time numbered with the prophets; will it be thought that all the words of king David were infallible, during the long year of his adultery? Nevertheless, "these (says the Scripture) are the last words of David, the sweet psalmist of Israel," "THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD SPAKE BY ME, AND HIS WORD WAS IN MY TONGUE."² Will it be thought, that all the words of the prophet Solomon were still infallible, when, in his old age, he fell into idolatry, and the salvation of his soul became a question in the church of God? And to come down to *the holy apostles and prophets* of Christ (Eph. iii. 5), will it be thought that all the words of Paul himself were infallible, and that he could still say Christ was speaking in him,³ when "the contention was sharp" (*παροξυσμὸς*) between him and Barnabas;⁴ or when, at the council, not knowing the person of the high priest, he spoke evil of the ruler of the people, and exclaimed, "God shall smite thee, thou whited wall?" Or still further (since some doubt may rest upon the character of this repri-

¹ Jer. xiv. 14; xxiii. 11, 16: Ezek. xiii. 2, 3. ² 2 Sam. xxiii. 1, 2.

³ 2 Cor. xiii. 3.

⁴ Acts xv. 39.

mand), will it be thought that the words of the apostle Peter were infallible, when he showed himself so blamable (*κατεγνωσμένος*) at Antioch,¹ as to be afraid to meet those who had been deputed by James; and when Paul was compelled, in the presence of all, to withstand him to the face, because he saw that he did not walk uprightly, according to the truth of the gospel (*οὐκ ἦν ὀρθοποδῆσας*)?

14. What must then be inferred from this first difference, which must be now admitted, between enlightenment and inspiration, with regard to the duration of these gifts?

It may be inferred:—

(1.) That the operations of the Holy Spirit differ in their essential character; and not alone in their degree.

(2.) That the infallibility of the sacred writers has depended not upon this enlightenment, (which, although shed upon some among them to an extraordinary extent, they had in common with all saints;) but solely upon their *Theopneustia*.

(3.) That the *Theopneustic* words, having all been miraculous, are also all words from God.

(4.) That our faith in each part of the Bible being no longer grounded upon the enlightenment of its writers, but upon the inspiration of their writings, we are spared the perplexing study of their inward state, the degree of their endowments, or of their holiness; and have to confide in God for every thing, and in man for nothing.

¹ Gal. ii. 11.

15. If such has been the difference between the enlightenment and the inspiration of the prophets and apostles, with respect to the *duration* of these gifts, what has it been with respect to their *extent* ?

Enlightenment has its degrees ; *Theopneustia* does not admit of them. A prophet is more or less enlightened of God ; but his word is not more or less inspired. It is inspired, or it is not : it is from God, or it is not. As respects inspiration, it has neither extent, degree, increase, nor diminution. David was enlightened by God ; John the Baptist was so, more than David ; a simple Christian may be so, more than John the Baptist ; an apostle, more than this Christian ; and Jesus Christ more than the apostle. But the inspired word given to David,—I will even say, the inspired word given to Balaam,—is from God, as much as that of John the Baptist, of Paul, or of Jesus Christ ! It is THE WORD OF GOD. The most enlightened of saints may not speak by inspiration ; whilst the most wicked, ignorant, and impure among men may “ not speak from his own impulse,” (ἀφ’ ἑαυτοῦ οὐκ εἰπεῖν,) but by *Theopneustia* (ἀλλὰ προφητεῦσαι).

In a man truly regenerated, there is always the divine and human spirit acting at the same time ; the one enlightening, and the other darkening ; and enlightenment will be so much the more extensive, as the action of the divine spirit shall surpass that of the human. In the prophets also, and especially in the apostles, were these two elements found.

1 John xi. 51.

But, thanks be to God! our faith in the words of Scripture does not in aught depend upon the unknown issue of this conflict between the spirit and the flesh in the sacred writers. Our faith proceeds right up to the heart of God.

16. May not much evil result from the doctrine which teaches that the language of inspiration is only the human expression of a superhuman revelation, and, so to speak, the natural reflection of a supernatural illumination?

There would always result from it one of these two evils: either the oracles of God would be abased to the level of the words of saints; or these latter would be elevated to that of the Scriptures. This fatal result has been uniformly manifested through every age. It was inevitable. All truly regenerated men being enlightened by the Holy Spirit, it thence follows, according to this doctrine, that they all possess, although in various degrees, the element of inspiration; so that, according to the arbitrary idea which may have been formed of their spiritual state, the sacred writers will be sometimes esteemed but as simple believers, and at another elevated to the rank of men inspired from on high.

17. Can religious associations be instanced in which the first of these evils has been realized—I mean, in which men have been thus led to abase the Scriptures to the level of the words of saints?

All the systems of Protestant theologians which take for granted that there is any mixture of error

in the Scriptures, are founded upon this doctrine ; from Semler and Ammon, down to Eichhorn, Paulus, Gabler, Schuster, and Restig ;—from De Wette to the more reverential systems of Michaëlis, Rosenmüller, Scaliger, Capellus, Jean de Clerc, or Vossius. According to these systems, the divine light which was shed upon the understanding of the sacred writers, might experience partial eclipses, through the inevitable effect of their natural infirmities, through a defective memory, innocent ignorance, or popular prejudice ; so that their writings have retained the trace of it, without its being apparent where the shades have fallen.

18. Can religious associations be also instanced in which the second of these evils has been consummated—I mean, in which, through having confounded inspiration with enlightenment, saints and theologians have been elevated to the rank of *Theopneustic* men ?

Two may especially be instanced ; viz. the Jews and the Latins.

19. What have the Jews done ?

They have regarded the Rabbis, of the times which succeeded the dispersion, as endued with an infallibility that placed them upon the level (if not above) that of Moses and the prophets. They have undoubtedly attributed a sort of divine inspiration to holy Scripture ; but they have forbidden the explanation of the oracles, otherwise than according to their traditions. They have called the immense volume of these “ commandments of men,” *the Oral*

Law (תורה שבעל פה), the *Doctrine*, or the *Talmud* (תלמוד), distinguishing it as *Mishna*, or *second law* (משנה), and *Gemara*, *completion* or *perfection* (גמרא). They have said that it was transmitted by God to Moses, from Moses to Joshua, from Joshua to the prophets, from the prophets to Ezra, from Ezra to the doctors of the Grand Synagogue, and from these last to the Rabbis *Antigona*, *Soccho*, *Shemaïa*, *Hillel*, and *Schammaï*; until, eventually, *Juda the Saint* recorded it in the *Traditions* or *Repetitions* of the law (משכרות, δευτέρωσεις), which, at a later period, with their commentary or complement (the *Gemara*), formed, in the first place, the *Talmud of Jerusalem*, and afterwards that of *Babylon*.

“One of the greatest obstacles which we meet with among the Jews,” observes the missionary M'Caul, “is their invincible prepossession in favour of their traditions and commentaries; so that we cannot induce them to purchase those of our Bibles which are without notes or commentaries.”¹

“The Law,” say they, “is the salt; the Mishna, the pepper; the Talmud, the sweet spices. Scripture is the water; Mishna, the wine; and the Gemara, spiced wine.” “My son,” said Rabbi Isaac, “learn to give more heed to the words of the scribes than to those of the law.” “Turn your children from the study of the Bible,” said the Rabbi Eleazar, on his death-bed, to his followers who inquired of him the way of life; “turn your children from the study of the Bible, and place them at the

¹ Letter from Warsaw, bearing date March 22, 1827.

less of Judaism?" "Know, my son," said the Rabbi Jesus, "that the words of the scribes are more accurate than those of the Pharisees!"

20. And what has been the result of these examinations?

It is, that three millions of immortal souls, either wandering over this earth, or waiting their deliverance, despised and persecuted everywhere, have been instrumental in carrying the Old Testament, in its purity and completeness, through all the regions of the universe, and continually have read it, in Hebrew, in thousands of synagogues, every Sabbath, during eighteen hundred years;—without, however, having discerned in it the Jewish Messiah, whom we adore, and the knowledge of whom would be their immediate deliverance, as it is destined one day to be their blessing and glory!

"Full well," said Jesus to them, "ye annul the commandment of God, in order to observe your own tradition!"

21. And what have the Latins done?

They have regarded the fathers, the popes, and the councils, of the successive centuries of the Romish church, as endowed with an infallibility, which, if it do not rank them above, places them on

1 In the Talmud of Jerusalem. Encycl. Method. See *Jews*. 2 Mark vii. 9; see also ver. 13; and Matt. xv. 3, 9. The Jews of the present day are beginning, at length, to recognise the evil character of their traditions. "The time has arrived," says the Jewish doctor Creisenach, "the time is come when the Talmud will bring the Jewish religion to a declining state of the most humiliating character, if every Jewish teacher do not promptly declare that its statutes are of human origin, and admit of change."

the level with the Saviour, and the prophets and apostles. They have, it is true, greatly differed from each other on the doctrine of the inspiration of the Scriptures; and the Theological Faculties of Douay and Louvain, for instance, have strenuously opposed¹ the opinions of the Jesuits, who, in the operation of the Holy Ghost, would only recognise a direction which preserved the sacred writers from error: but they have all prohibited the explaining of the holy Scriptures otherwise than according to their traditions.² They have imagined themselves entitled to speak in all their councils like the apostles and prophets at Jerusalem:—"It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us." They have declared that it belonged to them to define the true sense of holy Scripture. They also have called the immense mass of these "commandments of men," the *oral law*, the *unwritten traditions*, the *unwritten law*. They have said that they were transmitted by God, and dictated from the mouth of Jesus Christ, or the Holy Ghost, by a continual succession.

"Seeing," says the Council of Trent,³ "that saving truth and the discipline of morals are contained in the written books and in the unwritten traditions, which having been received by the apostles from the mouth of Jesus Christ, or by the

¹ Censure of 1588. ² Council of Trent, Session 4, 2d Decree of the 28th of April, 1546.—Bellarmin, *De Eccl.* book iii. c. 14; book iv. c. 3, 5, 6, 7, 8.—Cotton, book ii. c. 24, 34, 35.—Du Perron against Tilenus. ³ Council of Trent, 1st Decree, Session 4.

inspiration of the Holy Ghost, through succeeding times, and are come down to us,—following the example of the apostolic fathers, this Council receives with the same affection and reverence (*pari pietatis et reverentiæ affectu*), and honours all the books of the Old and New Testament (seeing that God is the author of them), together with the TRADITIONS as well concerning faith as morals, as having been dictated by the mouth of Jesus Christ, or that of the Holy Ghost, and kept in the catholic church through continual succession.”—“If any one receive not the said books, wholly and entirely, and in all their parts, as holy and canonical, as they have been wont to be read in the catholic church, and in the ancient vulgar translation,” (that of Jerome,¹ which, especially in Job and the Psalms numerously abounds with very serious and evident errors, and which has even since been abundantly corrected by other popes,) “or who, following his own will, contemns the said traditions,—let him be accursed !”

They have thus set the bulls of the bishops of Rome and the decrees of their synods above the Scriptures. “Holy Scripture,” say they, “does not contain all that is necessary to salvation, and is not sufficient.”² “It is obscure.”³ “It is not for the people to read the holy Scriptures.”⁴ “Many things,

¹ The Abbé Isidore Clarius in vain represented in the council, that there was rash folly in ascribing inspiration to a writer who had himself affirmed that he had none whatever. ² Bellarmin, *De Verbo Dei*, book iv. ³ Idem, book iii.—Charron, *Truth*, 3d.—Cotton, book ii. c. 19.—Bayle, *Treatise*. ⁴ Bellarmin, *De Verbo Dei*, book ii. c. 19.

which are not in the Scriptures, must be received with the obedience of faith."¹ "God must be served according to the tradition of the elders."²

The Bull *Exsurge* of Leo X.³ enumerates, among the heresies of Luther, his having said, "That it is not in the power of the church, nor of the pope, to establish articles of faith."

The Bull *Unigenitus*⁴ everlastingly condemns, as being respectively "false, captious, scandalous, pernicious, daring, suspected of heresies, savouring of heresy, heretical, impious, blasphemous," &c., the following propositions:—"It is useful, at all times, in all places, for persons of every condition to study Scripture, and to acquaint themselves with its spirit, holiness, and mysteries" (on 1 Cor. xvi. 5).⁵—"The reading of holy Scripture, by the man of business and financial trust, shows that it is for every class of mankind" (on Acts viii. 28).⁶—"The holy mysteriousness of the word of God is no reason why the laity should dispense with reading it" (on Acts vii. 21).—"Sunday ought to be hallowed by the reading of pious books, and especially the holy Scriptures. It is the milk which God himself, who knows the heart, has given for its sustenance. It is dangerous to desire to be weaned from it" (Acts xv. 21).—"It is a delusion to imagine that the knowledge of the mysteries of religion ought not to

¹ Bellarmin, *De Verbo Dei*, book iv. c. 3; and Du Perron against Tilenus.—Cotton, book ii. c. 24. ² Id. Bellarmin, book iv. c. 5.—

Cotton, book ii. c. 34, 35.—Council of Trent, Session 4. ³ 1520. Council, Harduini, vol. ix. p. 1893. ⁴ Of Clement XI., dated Sept. 8, 1713. ⁵ Proposition 79. ⁶ Proposition 80.

be imparted to females by the reading of pious books, after the example of the confidence with which Jesus Christ manifested himself to the Samaritan woman."—"It is not from the simplicity of women, but from the proud science of men, that has arisen the abuse of the Scriptures, and whence have come heresies" (on John iv. 26).—"It is closing the mouth of Jesus Christ to Christians, thus to wrest from their hands the holy book, or to keep it shut to them, by depriving them of the means of understanding it" (Thess. v. 2).—"To interdict the reading of the Scriptures to Christians, is to forbid the use of light to the children of light, and cause them to suffer a species of excommunication" (on Luke xi. 33).¹

Finally, more recently, in 1824, the circular letter of Pope Leo XII. complains bitterly of Bible societies, "which," he observes, "violate the traditions of the fathers and the Council of Trent, in spreading the Scriptures in the vulgar languages of all nations." ("*Non vos latet, venerandi fratres, societatem quamdam, dictam vulgo BIBLICAM, per totum orbem audacter vagari, quæ, spretis SS. Patrum traditionibus (!!!) et contra notissimum Tridentini consilii decretum, in id collatis viribus ac modis omnibus intendit, ut in vulgares linguas nationum omnium sacra vertantur, vel potius pervertantur Biblia.*")—"To avert this pestilence," he adds, "our predecessors have published several manifestoes, tending to show how very pernicious this perfidious

¹ Propositions 82, 83, 84, and 85.

invention is to faith and morals!" (*"ut ostendatur quantoperè fidei et moribus vaferrimum hocce inventum noxium sit!"*)

22. And what has resulted from these enormities?

That millions of immortal souls in France, Spain, Italy, Germany, America, and even in the Indies, although they hear every where the pure and complete New Testament, although they have unceasingly on every Sunday read it in Latin in thousands of edifices during twelve hundred years,—yet have been seduced from the fountain of life; have, like the Jews, "given more heed to the words of the scribes, than to those of the law;" have, according to the counsel of Eleazar, "turned their children from the study of the Bible, to place them at the feet of philosophers;" and have found, like Rabbi Jacob, "the words of the scribes more attractive than those of the prophets;" and have been led, during twelve centuries, to maintain doctrines entirely contrary to the word of God:¹ respecting the worship of images,² the exaltation of priests, their compulsory celibacy, their auricular confession, the absolution which they daringly pretend to give, and the magic power which they attribute to the most impure among them, to create his God by the Latin words *opere operato*; respecting an ecclesiastical priesthood of which Scripture has never spoken; the invocation of the dead; the spiritual preemi-

¹ Exod. xx. 4, 5. ² "*Quisquis elanguerit erga venerabilium imaginum adorationem (προσκύνησιν) hunc anate matizat sancta nostra et universalis synodus!"* (was written to the Emperor, in the name of the whole second council of Nice.) Councils, vol. vii. p. 583.

nence of that city which the Scripture has termed Babylon ; the use of an unknown language in worship ; the influence in heaven of a blessed, but lowly one, to whom Jesus himself said, " Woman, what is there between thee and me ? " the mass ; the limitation of the commemorative elements ; the interdiction of the Scriptures to the people ; indulgences ; purgatory ; the universal episcopacy of an Italian priest ; and the forbidding of meats.—Just as the single priesthood of the Son of man has been set aside by the establishment of a multitude of other priesthoods, so they have annulled his divinity, by acknowledging a thousand other gods, teaching that departed souls can hear the most secret prayers of man, and can protect the towns and kingdoms of the earth, accomplishing miracles in favour of their worshippers, &c. ; and have also annulled the inspiration of Scripture, in admitting a thousand other writings to share its divine authority, and which surpass and engulf its eternal infallibility !

It was against precisely similar pretensions of the heretics of his day, that St. Irenæus said :—" When you seek to convince them by the Scriptures, they, forthwith, begin to arraign the Scriptures themselves, as if they were imperfect, or lacked authority, or were uncertain, and as if those could not discover truth in the Bible who were ignorant of tradition ; because the latter was given, not in writing, but by the living voice." ¹

¹ Adv. Hæres. lib. iii. cap. 2. " Cùm enim ex scripturis arguuntur, in accusationem convertuntur ipsarum scripturarum, quasi non rectè

"Is it right (says Jesus to these also) that ye should annul the commandment of God, in order to observe your own tradition?" "*Benè irritum facitis præceptum Dei, ut traditionem vestram servetis!*" Mark vii. 9.

23. Without pretending in any manner to explain how the Holy Spirit could dictate the thoughts and words of the Scriptures, (since the knowledge of this mystery is not given to us, nor required of us,) what may be recognised in this divine work?

Two things,—first *an impulse*; that is to say, an influence upon *the will* of the men of God, to move them to speak and write;—and, secondly, *a suggestion*; that is to say, an influence upon their *understanding* and *organs*. To produce, in the first place, *within* them, ideas more or less elevated, of the truth which they were on the point of promulgating; and then, externally producing expressions the most divinely adapted to the eternal mind of the Holy Ghost.

24. Must we admit that the sacred writers were merely the pen, the hand, or the secretaries of the Holy Spirit?

They were doubtless these; but nearly always they were the living hand, the intelligent pen, the docile amanuensis, variously moved and sanctified; and that our faith may rest in God, and not in man, the Holy Ghost has been pleased to use, on many hæbeant, neque sint ex autoritate, et quia variè sint dictæ, et quia non possit ex his inveniri veritas ab his qui nesciant traditionem. Non enim per litteras traditam illam, sed per vivam vocem."

occasions, the hand of the ignorant, the pen of the unconcerned writer, having neither light nor holiness of character.

25. Has not the word of God, nevertheless, been often written to suit some occasion ?

Yes, doubtless ; and the occasion has been prepared by God, as well as the writer :—"The Holy Ghost (says Claudius¹) has made use of the pen of the evangelists and prophets : He supplied them the occasions of writing, he gave them the desire, and the strength ; and the matter, form, order, method, and expressions, are also by his immediate inspiration and under his direction."

26. But may not the individual character of each writer be evidently recognised in most of the sacred books ?

We would not fail to perceive this, and rejoice that it is so. The individual character which comes from God, and not from sin and the fall, has been prepared and sanctified by God for the work to which he had destined it.

27. Ought we therefore to think that all is equally inspired by God, in each of the sacred books of the holy Scriptures ?

The Scripture, in speaking of its own character, admits no distinction. All the sacred books, without any exception, are the word of the Lord. THE ENTIRE SCRIPTURE (*πάσα γραφή*) says St. Paul, IS INSPIRED BY GOD.

This declaration, we have already said, is suscep-

¹ Posthumous Works, vol. iv. p. 228.

tible of two different constructions,—depending upon the position of the verb, which is understood, being before or after the Greek word which is translated *inspired of God*. Both the one and the other of these constructions incontestably establish that in the mind of the apostle, every part, without exception, in any book of the Scriptures, is dictated by the Spirit of God; in fact, either way, the apostle equally attests that the SACRED WRITINGS (τὰ ἱερὰ γράμματα), of which he had just spoken to Timothy, belong all to *Theopneustic Scripture*.

Now, it is known that in the days of Jesus Christ, the entire church designated ONE ONLY AND SOLE COLLECTION OF BOOKS, by the term *Scripture*, or *the Scriptures*, or the *holy writings*, or *the law and the prophets* (γραφῆ,¹ or ἡ γραφή,² or αἱ γραφαί,³ or ὁ νόμος καὶ οἱ προφῆται,⁴ or τὰ ἱερὰ γράμματα).⁵ These were the twenty-two sacred books which the Jews had received from their prophets, and about which they perfectly agreed.⁶ The entire and perfect *Theopneustia* of all the Jewish Scriptures was in the days of the Saviour so especially the doctrine of all the ancient people of God, (as it was also that of Jesus Christ, of Timothy, and of St. Paul,) that we read the following testimony by the Jewish general, Josephus, (who had already attained his thirtieth year⁷ at the time that the apostle Paul

¹ 2 Pet. i. 20; John xix. 37. ² John x. 35; xvii. 12. ³ John v. 39; Matt. xxi. 42; xxvi. 54. Rom. xv. 4. 1 Cor. xv. 3. ⁴ Acts xxiv. 14; Luke xvi. 16, 29, 31; Matt. v. 17, 18; John x. 34. ⁵ 2 Tim. iii. 15, 16. ⁶ See Krebs and Læsnier on 2 Tim. iii. 15. ⁷ He was born in the year 37. See his life, Edit. Aureliæ, Allobr. p. 999.

wrote his second epistle to Timothy):—"Never," says he,—speaking of "the twenty-two books"¹ of the Old Testament, which he terms τὰ ἰδία γράμματα, as St. Paul here calls them, τὰ ἱερὰ γράμματα,— "Never, although so many ages have elapsed, has any one dared either to *take out*, *add to*, or TRANSPOSE the slightest particle of their contents;² for, with ALL JEWS, it is as a notion born with them, (πᾶσι δὲ σύμφυτον ἐστίν,) as soon as they can lisp,³ to call them THE TEACHINGS OF GOD, to rest in them, and, if it must be so, joyfully to die in their defence."

"They are, (says he further,) given to us by inspiration which comes from God, (κατὰ τὴν ἐπίπνοιαν τὴν ἀπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ.) But with regard to the other books, composed from the time of Artaxerxes, they are not considered as entitled to a similar faith."⁴

These passages from Josephus are quoted here, not as an authority for our faith, but as an historical testimony, which shows us in what sense the apostle Paul has spoken, and which declares to us,

¹ Against Appion, book i. p. 1037. (Δύο μόνα πρὸς τοῖς εἰκοσι βιβλία.) Our Bibles reckon thirty-nine books of the Old Testament, but Josephus and the early Jews, by combining the books of Samuel, the Kings, and the Chronicles, and putting Ruth with Judges, as a single book, Ezra with Nehemiah, Jeremiah with the Lamentations, and, lastly, Hosea with the eleven minor prophecies which follow him, reduce the number of their sacred books to seventeen.

² Οὐτε ΠΡΟΣΘΕΙΝΑΙ τις οὐδὲν, οὔτε ΑΦΕΛΕΙΝ αὐτῶν οὔτε ΜΕΤΑΘΕΙΝΑΙ τετολμήκεν. ³ Εὐθὺς ἐκ τῆς πρωτῆς γενέσεως ὀνομάζειν αὐτὰ ΘΕΟΥ ΔΟΓΜΑΤΑ. According to others, from the first generation.

⁴ Πίστεις δὲ οὐχὶ ὁμοίως ἡξιώται.

that, in mentioning the holy Scriptures (τὰ ἱερὰ γράμματα), and in saying that they are all *Theopneustic writings*, he has desired to testify to us, that there is nothing in the sacred books which was not dictated by God.

Now since the books of the New Testament are ἱερὰ γράμματα,—*holy writings, the writing of holy letters*, as well as those of the Old; since the apostles have themselves placed their writings,—St. Peter, for instance, having placed all THE EPISTLES OF PAUL, (πάσας τὰς ἐπιστολὰς),—in the same rank as THE OTHER SCRIPTURES (ὡς καὶ τὰς λοιπὰς ΓΡΑΦΑΣ); we are bound to conclude, that all that is in the sacred books of the Old and New Testament is inspired by God.

28. But, supposing all the sacred books (τὰ ἱερὰ γράμματα) are *Theopneustic*, how can we distinguish those which should belong, from those which do not belong to the collection?

It is, for the most part, a purely historical question.

29. But have not the reformed churches maintained, that it was by the Holy Spirit that they recognised the divinity of the sacred books; and, for example, does not the confession of faith of these churches in France, say, in its fourth article, “We admit the said books to be canonical, and the very certain rule of our faith, not so much by the common accord and consent of the church, as by testimony and conviction of the Holy Ghost, which enables us to discern them from other ecclesiastical books?”

This proposition is quite true, if applied to the entire Bible. In this sense the Bible is evidently a book (*αὐτόπιστος*) which needs no other testimony than *its own* to secure belief. To every one who studies it “with sincerity, and as in the sight of God,”¹ it presents itself, manifestly and inherently, as a miraculous gift; it reveals what conscience conceals, and discerns the thoughts and affections of the heart. It has predicted the future, changed the face of the world, converted souls, and created the church. “By an inward testimony, it thus constrains the heart to acknowledge the Holy Ghost;” an attestation of its inimitable character and divinity, independently of any human testimony. But we do not think that our churches have ever considered this as a criterion by which to discern any book, chapter, or verse of the word of God, so as thereby to authenticate its heavenly origin. We are bound to receive as divine the entire code of the Scriptures, previously to each of its parts having itself proved to us that it is from God.—It is not for us to sit in judgment upon this book; it is the book which will judge us.

30. Yet, has not Luther,² starting from a principle laid down by St. Paul,³ and St. John,⁴ said, “The touchstone by which we may ascertain the divinity of certain writings, is this—Do they, or do they not, preach Christ?”⁵ And among moderns

¹ 1 Cor. ii. 17. ² In his Preface to the Epistles of James and Jude.

³ 1 Cor. iii. 9, 10.

⁴ 1 John iv. 2.

⁵ Ob sie Christum treiben oder nicht.

has not Dr. Twisten also said, "The various parts of the Scriptures are more or less inspired, according as they are more or less evangelical; inspiration extends only to words and historical details, which have reference to the conscience of the Christian, to those truths which come from Jesus Christ, or to that which serves to show him to us?"¹

Christ is undoubtedly the way, the truth, and the life;² the spirit of prophecy is unquestionably the testimony of Jesus;³—but such a touchstone may in our hands become delusive—1st, because many writings admirably treat of Christ without being inspired; 2dly, because, although every part of the inspired Scriptures testifies of Jesus, we cannot, at a first view, always discern this Divine character; 3dly, and finally, because we are bound *to believe*, previously to *seeing*, that "all Scripture is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."⁴

31. What ground have we for receiving as sacred the books which, in the present day, form our collection of the Scriptures?

For the Old Testament, we have the testimony of the Jewish church; and for the New, we have that of the general church.

¹ Vorlesungen über die Dogmatik, 1829, I. B. pp. 421 — 429.

² John xiv. 6. ³ Rev. xix. 10. ⁴ 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17.

32. What is here to be understood by the testimony of the Jewish church ?

We understand by it the consent of all the **Jews**, whether Egyptians or Syrians, Asiatics or Europeans, Sadducees or Pharisees,¹ ancient or modern, good or bad.

33. What reason have we for concluding that the books of the Old Testament, which the Jewish church has given us, are divine ?

It is written that "the oracles of God were committed unto them ;"² which signifies that God, in his wisdom, chose them, under the almighty rule of his providence, to be the sure depositaries of his written word.

34. Does therefore our faith depend upon the Jews ?

The Jews have often fallen into idolatry ; they have denied the faith ; they have killed their prophets ; they have crucified the King of kings ; they have since hardened their hearts during nearly two thousand years ; they have filled up the measure of their iniquities ; and "wrath is come upon them to the uttermost."³ Yet "the oracles of God were committed to them : " and although these oracles condemn them ; although the vail remains on their

¹ See Josephus against Appion, book i. p. 1037.—Philo in Eichhorn.—Joseph. in Nov. Repert. p. 239.—De *Ægypticis Judæis* cf. Eichhorn, Einleit. ins. A. T. P. 1, § 21, pp. 73, 89, 91, 113, 114, 116.—De Sadducæis, § 35, p. 95.—Et Semler, App. ad liberal. V. T. interpret. p. 11.—Eichhorn, Allg. Bibl. der Bibl. Litterat. t. iv. pp. 275, 276. ² Rom. iii. 2. ³ 1 Thess. ii. 16.

heart, whilst they read the Old Testament;¹ whilst, for centuries, they have trampled upon the word of God, and worshipped their Talmud; they *have not been able* to do otherwise than give us pure and complete the *book of the Scriptures*; and the historian Josephus might still say, what he wrote respecting them eighteen hundred years ago, “Notwithstanding so many centuries have elapsed (τοσούτου γὰρ αἰῶνος ἤδη παρωχηκότος) no one, among the Jews, has dared to *add to, take from, or transpose* aught in the Holy Scriptures.”²

Have we not here cause for perpetual gratitude and admiration? How great is the interval of time which has elapsed between the times of the Jews and of Christians! and yet both they and we possess the same sacred books, without even the difference of a single letter.

35. What then have been the guarantee, cause, and means, of this fidelity on the part of the Jews?

We will answer this question in a few words only.—Our guarantee has been the promise of God; the cause was the providence of God; and the means the concurrence of the five following circumstances:—

(1.) The religion of the Jews, which has carried their respect for the letter of the Scriptures, even to superstition.

(2.) The indefatigable labours of the Masorites,

¹ 2 Cor. iii. 15. ² See this quotation in reply to the 27th question.

who supervised the sacred text with so much care, even in its least particles and accents.

(3.) The rivalry of Jewish sects, not one of which would ever have countenanced any unfaithfulness on the part of another.

(4.) The extraordinary dispersion of this people throughout the countries of the world, long previously to the destruction of Jerusalem; for “from old time (says James)¹ Moses had in every (heathen) city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath-day.”

(5.) And finally, the innumerable copies of the sacred book which are scattered among all nations.

36. And with respect to the New Testament, what is now to be understood by the testimony of the universal church?

By this is to be understood the general consent of the ancient and modern churches, Asiatic and European, good as well as bad, who call upon the name of Jesus Christ; that is to say, not only the sects which have continued faithful to the blessed Reformation, but the Greek, Armenian, Syriac, Roman, and Unitarian sects.²

37. Should therefore our faith be founded upon the catholic church?

¹ Acts xv. 21.—Josephus often attests the same fact.

² Following the example of Scripture, we think we may use the term *church*, sometimes as signifying all that the gospel net has gathered; and at others, only what is pure and possessing life. And with respect to the term *sect* (*αἵρεσις*, Acts xxiv. 14; xxvi. 5; xxviii. 22,) following the example of the apostle, we do not here use it either in a good or bad sense.

Every church has erred, or may err.—Several have denied the faith, persecuted Jesus Christ in his members, denied his divinity, rendered the cross of Christ of none effect, re-established the worship of graven images, exalted priests, shed the blood of saints, interdicted the Scriptures to the people, burned believers who desired to read them in the vulgar language, established in the temple of God him who sits as God, lording it over the Scriptures, worshipping traditions, making war against God, and trampling truth in the dust.—Nevertheless, the new oracles of God have been confided to them, as were those of the Old Testament to the Jews. And notwithstanding these oracles condemn them, and though for centuries they have despised the Scriptures and almost adored their traditions, they have *not been able* to do otherwise than give us, pure and complete, the Scriptures of the New Testament; and we may apply to them what Josephus has said of the Jews, “Although so many centuries have elapsed, no one in *the churches* has dared to add to, or retrench from, the holy Scriptures:” it was so ordered that, *in spite of themselves*, the churches should transmit them to us in their integrity. What new cause have we here for admiration and gratitude! How wide has been the division between the churches of the East and that of Rome, between the adherents of the Pope and the Reformers? and yet among all, Greeks, Latins, and Protestants, there is but one sacred book of the New Testament, without the difference of a single iota.

38. Was there not however, connected with Christianity, a powerful sect which, during the last three hundred years, has introduced into the canon of the Scriptures apocryphal books, disavowed by the Jews,¹ (as even Pope St. Gregory attests,)² and rejected by the fathers of the ancient church,³ as we learn from St. Jerome?⁴

This is what has been done, it is true, by the Latin sect, in the persons of the fifty-three individuals who, on the 8th April, 1546, composed the celebrated Council of Trent, and who pretended to represent THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST!⁵ But they could only do so as regards the Old Testament, which was confided to the Jews, and not to Christians. Neither this council, nor even the most corrupt and idolatrous of the churches, have *ever been able* to add one apocryphal book to the New Testament. God has not permitted this, in spite of all their evil and impious purposes. Thus it is that the Jews have been able to reject the New Testament, which is not committed to them; whilst they have NEVER BEEN ABLE to introduce any human book into the Old Tes-

¹ Josephus against Appion, book i. 8.—Eusebius, H.E. book iii. c. ix. x.

² Exposition of the Book of Job.—See the History of the Council of Trent, by Fra Paolo, vol. i. book ii. sec. 47.

³ Origen (Eusebius, H.E. book iv. c. 26.) St. Athanasius. (Paschal Epistle.)—St. Hilary. (Prolog. in Psalmos, p. 9. Paris, 1693.)—Epiphanius. (Lardner, vol. iv. p. 312.)—St. Gregory of Nazianzen. (Carm. 33. Op. vol. ii. p. 98.)

⁴ In Præfat. ad Libr. Regum; sive Prologo. galeato. (See Lardner, vol. v. pp. 16—22.) ⁵ Forty-eight bishops and five cardinals; all, or nearly all, Italians.—Fra Paolo, vol. i. book ii. § 57.

tament. God has ever prevented them; and they have even particularly excluded from it the books which these fifty-three ecclesiastics of Trent pretended to introduce in the name of the universal church.

39. And what have been the guarantee, cause, and means of this fidelity, on the part of the universal church, in transmitting to us the oracles of God in the New Testament?

We reply in very few words.

The guarantee of it has been the promise of God; the cause of it, the providence of God; and the means of it, have been, especially, the concurrence of the following circumstances:—

(1.) The religion of the ancient Christians, and their extraordinary respect for the sacred texts;—a respect which manifested itself on all occasions, in their churches,¹ in their councils,² in their oaths,³ and even in their domestic habits.⁴

(2.) The labours of theologians, in various ages, for the preservation of the sacred text.

(3.) The numerous scriptural quotations made by the fathers of the church.

¹ Photius against Manich. vol. i. apud Wolf. anecto. p. 32, *sq.*—J. Ciampini Rom. Vetera Monum. i. p. 126, *sq.*—Every christian community in the East, even the least considerable, preserved in its places of worship a collection of its sacred books. (See Scholz's Proleg.)

² Cyrill. Alex. in Apol. ad Theodos. Imp.—Act. Concil. ed. Mansi, vol. vi. col. 579; vii. col. 6; ix. col. 187; xii. col. 1009, 1052, al.

³ Corb. Byz. i. p. 422, al. ⁴ See St. Jerome, preface to Job—St. Chryst. Hom. 19, *De Statuis*. The women, he observes, had a custom of suspending copies of the gospels round the necks of their children. See the sixty-eighth canon of the sixth Conc. in Trullo.

(4.) The mutual jealousy of the sects into which the christian church is subdivided.

(5.) The versions made, from the first centuries, in several ancient languages.

(6.) The number, and the abundant dissemination of the manuscripts of the New Testament.

(7.) The dispersion of the new people of God to the extremities of Asia, and even to the extreme limits of the West.

40. Does it then result from these facts that the authority of the Scriptures is founded, as Bellarmin has said,¹ on that of the church ?

The theologians of Rome, it is true, have gone so far as to say that, without the testimony of the church, the Scripture has no more authority than Titus Livius, the Alcoran, or the fables of Æsop;² and Bellarmin, having, no doubt, in horror such impious sentences, has desired to distinguish the authority of Scripture *in itself*, and *in relation to us* (quoad se, et quoad nos). In this last sense, he has said that the Scripture has authority only by the testimony of the church. Our answer will be very simple.

Every manifestation having three causes,—viz. a cause objective, a cause subjective, and an instrumental cause,—it may be also said that the knowledge which we receive of the authority of the Scriptures, has, in the first place, for its *objective*

¹ Book ii. de Conciliis, c. 12. ² Hosius against Brentium, book iii.—Eckius, de Auth. Ecclesiæ.—Bayli Tractat. i. Catech. 9, 12.—Andradius, book iii.—Defens. Conc. Trident. Stapleton adv. Whittaker, book i. c. 17.

cause, the Holy Bible itself, which proves its divinity by its own beauty and by its own works; in the second place, it has for *subjective* (or efficient) *cause*, the Holy Ghost,¹ who confirms and seals in our souls the testimony of God; thirdly, and finally, it has for its *instrumental cause*, the church,—not the Roman; nor the Greek, more ancient than the Roman; nor the Syriac, more ancient than either; but the universal church.

The pious St. Augustine explains this threefold cause, in his book against the epistle of Manicheus, termed *Fundamenti*.² In speaking of the time when he was yet a Manichean, he says:³—"I might not have believed the gospel, had I not been led to it by the authority of the church;" but he is careful to add:—"Let us follow those who, in the first place, invite us to believe, whilst as yet we are not in a state to see; in order that, by faith itself, being rendered more capable (*valentiores*) we may deserve to understand what we believe. Then it will be no longer men, but God himself within us, who will establish our mind and enlighten it."

In this matter, therefore, the church is a servant, and not a mistress; a depositary, and not a judge.

¹ Isaiah liv. 13; lix. 21.

² Edition of Mabillon, vol. viii.

³ "Evangelio non crederem" (following the African custom, for credidisse, as Confess. lib. ii. c. 8: Si tunc amarem, for amavissem) "nisi me Ecclesiæ commoveret (commovisset) autoritas (ch. 5). Eos sequamur qui nos invitant prius credere, quàm nondum valemus intueri, ut ipsâ fide valentiores facti; quod credimus intelligere mereamur, non jam hominibus, sed ipso Deo intrinsicus mentem nostram firmante et illuminante" (ch. 14). Opera August. Paris, Mabillon, t. viii.

She exercises a charge, and not an authority ; *ministerium, non magisterium*.¹ She bears a testimony, and not a sentence. She discerns the canon of the Scriptures, but she is not its authoress ; she has acknowledged their authenticity, but she has not conferred it. And, as the men of Sichem believed in Jesus Christ by means of an impure but penitent woman who had called them around him, so we say to the church, "Now we believe, not because of thy saying, for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world."² We have, therefore, believed *per eam*, not *propter eam* ; through her means, and not because of her. We found her in the attitude of prayer ; she showed us the object of her adoration, and we bowed the knee with her in worship. If I join myself to the rear-guard of an imperial army, and ask them to show me which is the prince, and to conduct me to him ; their compliance would be doing, with respect to him, and for me, precisely what the church does with respect to the Scriptures. They will not call their regiment the *general army* ; and especially they will not say, that their general only has authority by their testimony, whether with respect to himself, or to us ; whether *quoad se*, or *quoad nos*, (to adopt the language of Bellarmin.) The authority of the Scriptures is not founded upon that of the church ; it is the church which is founded on the authority of the Scriptures.

¹ Turretini, *Theologia elenct.* vol. i. loc. 2. quæst. 6.

² John iv. 42.

41. If the authenticity of the Scriptures is for the most part proved by history, how is their *Theopneustia* established?

Solely by the Scriptures.

42. But is such an argument rational? Is it not begging the question, and seeking to prove inspiration by inspiration?

It would indeed be begging the question, if, in order to prove that the Scriptures are inspired, we sought their testimony by taking their inspiration for granted. But care has been taken not to proceed thus. The Bible, in the first place, is considered as an historical document, worthy of our respect on account of its authenticity, and as the medium through which the truth of Jesus Christ may be known, nearly in the same degree as the doctrine of Socrates would be learned by studying the books of Plato, or that of Leibnitz by the writings of Wolff. Now this document declares to us, in every page, that the entire system of religion which it teaches is founded on the grand fact of the miraculous intervention of God, in the revelation of its history and doctrines.

The learned Michaëlis himself, whose principles respecting inspiration are so lax, declares that the authenticity of the apostolical writings necessarily results from their inspiration. There is no middle point, says he; if their contents be true, they are inspired; if they were not inspired, they would not be founded in truth; but if they are founded in truth, then are they inspired.

There is nothing in the reasoning we have offered, which at all resembles begging the question.

43. If it be by the Bible itself that the doctrine of the indubitable inspiration of the sacred books is established, how can it be proved that this inspiration is universal, and that it extends itself even to the lesser details of what they teach ?

If the Scripture itself assures us of its *Theopneustia*, the Scripture alone can inform us in what that *Theopneustia* has consisted. To admit the inspiration on its own testimony, it ought to have sufficed us to be assured that the Scripture is authentic; but to admit its plenary inspiration, we shall have something more, for we shall be able to invoke its own testimony as a record already acknowledged to be divine. It will be no longer the books only which will tell us, "We are inspired;" it will be authentic and inspired books telling us, "We are so entirely."—The Scriptures are *inspired*, we affirm, because, being authentic and true, they themselves say they are inspired; but the Scriptures are *plenarily inspired*, we add, because, being inspired, they affirm that they are so entirely and without any exception.

It is therefore here purely and simply a doctrine which the Bible will teach us, as it teaches us many others. And in like manner as we believe that Jesus Christ is God, and took upon him human nature, because it tells us so; so also do we believe that the Holy Ghost is God, and that he has dictated all the Scriptures.

44. Who are the theologians who have opposed the doctrine of inspiration ?

Previously to enumerating them here, we ought to make one general observation, which is—that, with the exception only of Theodore de Mopsueste, the philosophical theologian—whose numerous writings, so strongly tainted with Pelagianism, were condemned for their Nestorianism, in the fifth general Council (Constantinople, 553), and whose principles respecting *Theopneustia* were very loose ;—with the exception we say of Theodore de Mopsueste, the long period of the FIRST EIGHT CENTURIES OF CHRISTIANITY, did not produce a single theologian who disavowed the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures, save only among the most violent of the heretical sects which have troubled the christian church ; I mean the Gnostics, the Manichæans, the Anomeans, and the Mahometans. St. Jerome himself, who in speaking of the style of certain passages of the sacred books has allowed himself to use language which will ever incur the reprobation of all pious men,¹ maintains however with regard also to those very passages, the entire inspiration of every part of holy Scripture ;² and even recognises, under what he terms, “vulgarity of language and evident absurdity of reasoning,” intentions of the Holy Spirit replete with profound mysteries. And even if,

¹ “Qui solœcismos in verbis facit, qui non potest hyperbaton reddere sententiamque concludere.”—Comment. in Epist. ad Titum, book i. (ad cap. i. 1.)—Et ad Eph. book ii. (ad cap. iii.)—See also his Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians. ² Proem. in Ep. ad Philem.—Commentar. in Ep. ad Gal. book ii.

transporting ourselves from the days of St. Jerome, four hundred years beyond, we come to the celebrated Agobard, whom Du Pin has affirmed to be the first of the fathers of the church who abandoned the doctrine of a verbal inspiration,¹ it is most unjustly, says Dr. Rudelbach, that any such accusation has been brought against this bishop. It is true that in disputing with the Abbé Fredegise² respecting the latitude permitted to the Latin translators, with regard to the words of the sacred text, he maintained that the dignity of the word of God consisted in the power of its sense, and not in the pomp of its language; but he was careful to add, “The authority of the apostles and prophets remains untouched, and no one is justified in believing that they could have placed a single letter otherwise than they have done;—because their authority was mightier than the heavens and the earth.”³

If therefore we would class in the order of time, the men whose views were opposed to the entire *Theopneustia* of our sacred books, they would stand thus:—

In the second century, the Gnostics (Valentin, Cerdon, Marcion, his disciple, &c.) They believed in two equal independent opposite and co-eternal principles; the one good, and the other bad. One, the Father of Jesus Christ; the other, the Author

¹ Du Pin, Doctor of Sorbonne, Prolegom. on the Bible, book i. v. 256. ² Agobard, adv. Fredeg. book c. 912. ³ Rudelbach,

Zeitschrift, 1st paper, 1840, p. 48.

of the Law; and in this belief they rejected the Pentateuch, and acknowledged of the New Testament, only the Gospel of Luke, and a portion of St. Paul's Epistles.

In the third century, Manes, or Manichæus, who styling himself the *Comforter* promised by Jesus Christ, corrected the books of the Christians, and added his own to them.

In the fourth century, the Anomæans, or Ultra-Arians, (for Arius himself was more moderate in his language,) who maintained with Aetius their chief, that the Son was a created intelligence, *dissimilar*¹ to the *Father*, invested with a human body, but without a human soul. They spoke of the Scriptures with an irreverence equivalent to the denial of their entire inspiration. "When they were urged for scriptural reasons," says St. Epiphanius, "they escaped by using such language as this:—'It was as a man that the apostle said these things;' or, 'why do you oppose me with the Old Testament?'" And what is added by the pious Bishop? "It was consistent with order," says he, "that they who denied the glory of Christ should more peremptorily deny that of his apostles."²

In the fifth century, Theodore de Mopsueste, head of the school of Antioch, an accomplished philosopher, and a learned, though rash, theologian. There remain to us, of his numerous writings, only a few fragments, which have been preserved by other

¹ *Δυσμοτος*—hence their name. ² Epiphan. advers. Hær. lxx. 6. Aetii Salutat. Confut. vi.

authors. His books, as we have already remarked, were condemned (two hundred years after his death) by the council of Constantinople. At this jurisdiction, they cited his writings against Apollinaris, in which he had said, that the book of Job was only a poem arising from an heathen soil—that Solomon had doubtless received λόγον γυνώσεως, but not λόγον σοφίας—that the Song of Solomon was nothing but a long and insignificant bridal ode, devoid of prophetic, historical, or scientific character, and of a class with the Symposium of Plato,¹ &c. &c.

In the seventh century, Mahomet (whose false religion is rather a heresy of Christianity, and who at least speaks of Christ as honourably as for the most part the Socinians have done.) Mahomet acknowledged, and often cited as inspired, the books of the Old and New Testament; but he said they were corrupted, and like Manes, added his own to them.

In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, as it appears, there arose among the Jewish Talmudists, the system of those modern theologians who seek to class various passages of holy Scripture under several orders of inspiration, and to reduce *Theopneustia* to proportions more or less natural. It was under the double influence of the Aristotelian philosophy and the theology of the Talmud, that the Jews of the middle age (herein differing greatly from the ancient

¹ Acta Concilii Constantinop. ii. collat. iv. 65, 71, apud Harduin.
—Acta Concilii, vol. iii. p. 87—89.

Jews¹) imagined this theory. It was the time of Solomon Jarchi, David Kimchi, Averroe, Aben-Ezra, Joseph Albo, and especially of *Moses Maïmonides*, the Spanish Jew, who has been styled *the Eagle of Theological Doctors*. Maïmonides, borrowing the vague terms of Peripatetism, taught that prophecy is not an exclusive production of the work of the Holy Spirit. He said also, if the *intellectus agens* (the intellectual influence which is in man) is more intimately associated with reason, it gives birth to the *secta sapientum speculatorum*; and that, when this agent operates more upon the imagination, it gives birth to the *secta politicorum, legistatorum, divinatorum, and præstigiatorum*; so also, when this superior principle exercises its power in a more perfect manner on these two faculties of the mind at once, it gives birth to the *secta prophetarum*. Nearly all the modern Jewish doctors have adopted the ideas of Maïmonides, and this also appears to have been the recent system of M. Schleiermacher respecting inspiration. It was in setting out upon these principles that theological doctors have admitted several degrees of inspiration in the prophets. Maïmonides, at one time, designated eight; and at another, eleven. Joseph Albo reduced them to four, and Abarbanel to three. They applied these distinctions of various degrees of inspiration to the division of the Old Testament, into *law, prophets, and hagiographa* (תורה נביאים כתובים). The *Kethu-*

¹ See Josephus against Appion, book i. c. 7, 8; and Philo, ed. Hæschel. p. 515, and p. 918.

him, according to Maïmonides, would not have received the prophetic Spirit (רוח נבואה), but only the Holy Ghost (רוח הקדש) which, according to his view, would be but a human faculty, by which man might give utterance to words of wisdom and holiness.¹

The modern German school of the opponents of inspiration, appears therefore to be but a reproduction of the theory of the Rabbins of the thirteenth century; or borrowed from the Talmudist doctors of our own time.

In the sixteenth century, Socinus² and Castellion³ maintained that the sacred writers sometimes failed in memory, and could err upon subjects of minor importance.

In the seventeenth century, according to the celebrated Turretini,⁴ three orders of adversaries opposed inspiration. These were, besides infidels, properly so called, (*atheos* and *gentiles*), 1. Fanatics (*enthusiastæ*), who accused the Scripture of imperfection, in order to enhance their peculiar revelations;—2. the adherents of the pope (*pontificii*), who, he observes, did not hesitate to betray the cause of Christianity, by insisting upon the corruption of the original text (*fontium*), with a view to obtain repute for their Latin translation;—3. the Rationalists of various classes (*libertini*), who, still continuing in the church, unceasingly endeavoured to shake the

¹ Moses Maïmonides, *More Nebuchim*, part ii. c. 37 and 45.—Rudelbach (*ut suprà*), p. 53. ² De Author. Script. ³ In *Dialogis*.

⁴ Theol. elenctic. loc. 2. quæst. 5.

authority of the Scriptures, by objecting to them, as containing difficult passages and seeming contradictions (*ἀπορα καὶ ἐναντιοφανή*).

During the latter part of the *eighteenth century*, this third class of opponents has considerably multiplied in Germany. Semler gave the first impulse to what he termed the liberal interpretation of the Scriptures; he repelled the idea of inspiration, denied all prophecy, and spoke of miracles as allegories or exaggerations.¹ Ammon, at a later period, established positive rules for this impious manner of explaining the miraculous facts of Scripture.² A legion of doctors equally daring, viz. Paulus, Gabler, Schuster, Restig, and many others, have abundantly made the practical application of these principles in their writings. Eichhorn, more recently, has reduced to a system the Rationalist doctrine of prophecy.³ De Wette, in his *Preliminary Manual*, does not appear to have recognised any true prediction whatever in the prophets, nor to have found any other difference between the prophets of Israel and those of heathen nations, than the spirit of morality and sincerity which characterises monotheism, and which (says he) purified the Hebrew prophecy, whilst it was lacking in the *heathen seers*.⁴ Hug, in his *Introduction to the New Testament*,⁵

¹ Preface to the *Compendium of Schultens*, on the Book of Proverbs, by Vogel. Halle, 1769, p. 5. ² De interpret. narrationum mirab.

N. T. (at the commencement of his *Ernesti*.) ³ Einleitung in das

Alte Testament; 4th edit. Götting, 1824, vol. iv. p. 45. ⁴ Zweyte

verbesserte Auflage. Berlin, 1822, p. 279. Lehrbuch. Anmerkungen.

⁵ Einleitung, &c. 2d ed. 1821.

nowhere blunders in inspiration. Meuschen admits it for the part of Scripture, and rejects it for a while. So did La Caze in the last century. Rosenmüller is still more unsettled.

Of late years, however, the most respectable theologians among the Germans have admitted several degrees of inspiration in various parts of the Scriptures, making distinction as to passages which say they have to do bearing upon salvation: and pretending to discern as did formerly Socinus and Castellus, limits of memory and errors upon subjects which they deem of little importance.

Among the English, also, we have recently seen men otherwise estimable, allowing themselves to rank various parts of the word of God under different classes of inspiration.

41. Can many distinguished theologians be named who have maintained the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures?

It was the uniform doctrine of the entire church, until the days of the reformation.

— There is remarks Roderbach, scarcely a single point respecting which a greater or more cordial unanimity prevailed, during the first eight centuries of Christianity.*

* Sentiments of some Dutch Theologians. Letters XI. XII.—La Caze. Traité de l'Écriture, vol. iv. p. 139 and following.
* Klein is inspired in Praxis wodurch in Alterthum eine grossere und theologische Einsamungkeiten herrschte. Zeitschrift von Roderbach und Gunkel, 1840, vol. i. p. 1 to 47. Die Lehre von der Inspiration der Heiligen Schrift mit Berücksichtigung der neuesten Untersuchungen darüber von Schleiermacher, Twisten, und Steudel.

We recommend to the reader who may desire to consult historical testimony on this subject, the Dissertation recently published, by the learned Doctor of Magdeburg, whom we have just named. The author, in the first place, passes in review the first eight hundred years of the christian era, and by very numerous quotations from the Greek and Latin fathers, establishes the following principles :—

(1.) The ancient church teaches, with unanimous voice, that all the canonical writings of the Old and New Testament ARE GIVEN BY THE HOLY SPIRIT of God ; and it is upon this sole foundation, and independently of the garbled understanding which human imperfection can there acquire, that the church grounds her faith in the perfection of the Scriptures.

(2.) The ancient church, as a consequence of this first principle, maintains as firmly THE INFALLIBILITY of the Scriptures, as their *sufficiency* (*αὐτάρκειαν*) and fulness. She does not only attribute to her sacred authors *axiopistia*, that is to say, a credibility fully merited ; but also *autopistia*, which is, a right to be believed, independently of their circumstances, or their personal qualities, and on account of the infallible and heavenly authority which has caused them to speak.

(3.) The ancient church, considering the entire Scripture as the word of God addressed to man and dictated by the Holy Ghost, has always maintained that it contains NOTHING ERRONEOUS, useless, or superfluous ; and that, in this divine work, as in

that of creation, may be ever seen, amidst the richest abundance, the greatest and wisest harmony;—each word having its end, its point of view, and its sphere of efficacy. “*Nihil otiosum, nec sine signo, neque sine argumento apud eum*” (Irenæus); πᾶν ῥῆμα ἐργαζόμενον τὸ ἑαυτοῦ ἔργον (Origen). It was in powerfully establishing and defending both these characters of the Scriptures, that the ancient church proclaimed the sublime and profound idea which she had of their *Theopneustia*.

(4.) The ancient church has always maintained that the doctrine of holy Scripture is THROUGHOUT THE SAME, and that the Spirit of the Lord therein proclaims one unvarying testimony. She rose in her might against that science, falsely so called, (1 Tim. vi. 20,) which already in early times was set forth in the doctrines of the Gnostics, and which, pretending to attribute imperfection to the Old Testament, assumed the existence of oppositions between one apostle and another.

(5.) The ancient church thought, it is true, that inspiration ought chiefly to be viewed as a passive state; but at the same time, as a state in which the human faculties, FAR FROM BEING QUENCHED, or laid aside by the operation of the Holy Ghost, were elevated by his energy, and invigorated by his light. She often compared the mind of the prophets and apostles to “a stringed instrument, attuned by the Holy Ghost, to send forth the divine harmony of eternal life.” (Athena-

gorus.¹⁾ Their task was simply to present themselves to the powerful action of the Holy Spirit, in order that his divine touch, in descending from heaven upon the human lyre, might use it to reveal to us the knowledge of the mysteries of heaven." (Justin Martyr.²⁾ But in their view this lyre all passive as it was with regard to the action of God, was a heart of man, a mind of man, an understanding of man, renewed by the Holy Ghost, and filled with life divine.

(6.) The ancient church, in fully maintaining this continued action of the Holy Ghost in the composition of the Scriptures, forcibly repelled the false notions that certain Doctors, especially among the Montanists, endeavoured to propagate concerning the activity of the Spirit of God and the passivity of the spirit of man in *Theopneustia*; as if the prophet, losing the control of his senses, had been in the state which the heathen attribute to their sybils (*μανία* or *ἔκστασις*). Whilst the Cataphrygians pretended that an inspired man loses his senses under the powerful influence of divine energy (*excidit sensu, obumbratus scilicet virtute divinâ*³⁾, the ancient church maintained, on the contrary, that the prophet DOES NOT SPEAK IN A STATE OF ECSTASY (*non loquitur in ἔκστασις*⁴⁾, and that by this character false prophets may be distinguished from the true. This was the doctrine of Origen against Celsus

¹ Legatio pro Christianis, c. 9.

² Ad Græcos Cohortatio, c. 8.

³ Tertullian adv. Marcion, book v. c. 22.

⁴ Hieronym. Proëm. in Nahum.—Præfat. in Habacuc, in Esaïam.—Epiphani. adv. Hæreses, book ii.—Hæres. 48, c. 3.

(book vii. c. 4); as also of Miltiades, Tertullian, Epiphanius, Chrysostom, Basil, and Jerome, against the Montanists.

(7.) The ancient church, by OTHER DEFINITIONS, which we will not indicate here, has rendered the idea of *Theopneustia* more intelligible, and has disentangled it from the difficulties with which it has been sometimes obscured, thereby further showing how dear to her was this doctrine.

(8.) The ancient church thought that, to merit the name of the action of God, inspiration ought to be extended to WORDS as well as to things.

(9.) The ancient church, by her invariable mode of quoting the Scriptures in order to establish and defend her doctrines—in her manner of EXPOUNDING and COMMENTING upon them, and, finally, by THE USE which she recommends of them to all Christians without exception, as a privilege and a duty,—by this threefold habitude, demonstrates (still more forcibly if it be possible than she could have done by direct declaration) how firm was her attachment to the doctrine of a verbal inspiration.

And it is not alone by expositions of the word, that the ancient church shows us that the entire inspiration of the Scriptures has been with her an unchangeable axiom; she manifests it yet more signally when engaged in RECONCILING THE APPARENT CONTRADICTIONS which the narratives of the evangelists sometimes exhibit. Having suggested any explanation, she does not insist upon it, but hastens to the conclusion that whatever may be the

value of what she offers, a congruity between the passages necessarily does exist, and that the difficulty is only apparent; the cause of it being in our ignorance, and not in the Scripture. "Be it thus, or be it otherwise," she says with Julius Africanus,¹ "no matter; the Scripture remains entirely true!" (τὸ μεντοὶ Εὐαγγέλιον πάντως ἀληθεύει.) This is always her conclusion as to the perfect reconcilableness of every difficulty which can be presented by the word of God.

(10.) The ancient church was so strongly attached to the doctrine of the personality of the Holy Ghost, and of his sovereign action in the composition of the entire Scriptures, that she felt no hesitation in admitting at the same time the greatest variety, and THE GREATEST LIBERTY, as to the phenomena, occasions, persons, characters, and in all the external circumstances under the concurrence of which this work of God was accomplished. At the same time that she acknowledged with St. Paul that in all the operations of this Spirit it is "that one and the selfsame Spirit dividing to every man severally as he will," (1 Cor. xii. 11;) the church equally admits that, in the work of Theopneustia, the Divine causality has been exercised with much allowance of human manifestations. And let us here be careful to notice, that there is not seen in the ancient church, a certain class of

¹ In his Letter to Aristides, on the Harmony of the Gospels recording the Genealogies of Jesus Christ.—*Eusebius, Hist. Eccl.* book i. c. 7.

doctors adopting one of these points of view (that of causality and Divine sovereignty), and another class attaching themselves exclusively to the other (that of human personality, and the divinity of occasions, affections, endowments, style, and other circumstances of the writer). "If it were thus," observes Rudelbach, "they might justly accuse us of having ourselves found a solution of the problem, instead of having faithfully exhibited the views of the ancient church." But no; on the contrary, you will often see the selfsame author set forth at the same time and without scruple both these points of view; viz. the work of God and the personality of man. This is what is seen for instance abundantly in Jerome, who, whilst speaking plainly of the peculiarities of the sacred writers, still entertained the idea of a word imparted by God into their mind. This is also what is remarked in Irenæus, who, insisting above all others upon the action of God in the inspiration of the Scriptures, is the first of the fathers of the church who gives us a detailed account of the several personal circumstances of the evangelists. This again, will be found in St. Augustine; and you will likewise see it in the father of ecclesiastical history, Eusebius of Cæsarea, who gives so many details respecting the four authors of the gospels; and who nevertheless professes the most rigorous principles in connexion with the plenary inspiration of the canonical books.

(11.) The ancient church shows us yet more completely in two other traits, the idea which she

formed of inspiration: on the one hand, by the care which she has taken to ESTABLISH THE RELATIONS between the doctrine of *Theopneustia* and that of the gifts of grace; and, on the other, by the care which she has taken to EXHIBIT THE PROOFS OF INSPIRATION.

(12.) Finally, if the ancient church exhibits this unsought (*ungesuchte*) and unanimous accord in the doctrine of inspiration, it must not be imagined that this great phenomenon is confined, as has been insinuated, to any particular system of theology, or can be explained by such system. Neither must this admirable harmony be viewed as the germ of a more complete theory, which would be established in the church at a later period. Certainly not. The attacks which from time to time were made by heretics in the first centuries, and THE NATURE OF THE ANSWERS made to them by the ancient church, demonstrably prove to us on the contrary, that this doctrine was firmly rooted in the conscience of the church. Whenever the fathers, in maintaining some point of truth by passages of Scripture, so far overcame their adversaries as to leave them no other defence than the denial of the plenary inspiration of these divine testimonies, the church has always regarded the question as decided. The adversary was condemned; he had nothing more to say in the matter; he denied the Scripture as the word of God! What further remained to do, but to exhibit to him the deformity of his own argument, and to

say,—To this you have come! as we would show a man who had disfigured himself, his own face in a glass. This is what the fathers have done.

Such are the facts; such is the voice of the church.

On first considering this subject, we had collected, with the intention of inserting them here, a long series of passages taken, in the first place, from Irenæus;¹ Tertullian;² Cyprian;³ Origen;⁴ Chrysostom;⁵ Justin Martyr;⁶ Epiphanius;⁷ Augustine;⁸ Athanasius;⁹ Hilarius;¹⁰ Basilus the Great;¹¹ Gregory the Great;¹² Gregory of Nyssa;¹³ Theodoret;¹⁴ Cyril of Alexandria;¹⁵ afterwards from the most esteemed of the fathers in the succeeding centuries; and finally, from the most pious theolo-

¹ Advers. Hæreses. book ii. c. 47; book iii. c. 2; book iv. c. 34.
² De Animâ, c. 28. Advers. Marcion, book iv. c. 22. De Præscrip. adv. Hæret. c. 25. Advers. Hermog. c. 22. ³ De Opere et Eleemos. pp. 197—201. Adv. Quirin. Adv. Judæos, præfat. ⁴ Homil. xxxix. in Jerem. (already quoted herein, c. iv. sect. 1.) Homil. ii. in eumd. c. xix. and l. Homil. xxv. in Matt. Ejusd. Philocalia, book iv. Commentar. in Matthæum, pp. 227—428. (edit. Huet.) Homil. xxvii. in Numer. in Levit. hom. v. ⁵ Homil. xlix. in Ioan.; Homil. xl. in Ioan. v. Homil. ix. in 2 Tim. iv. Serm. 53, de util. lect. script. Serm. 3, de Lazarod. ⁶ Apol. i. c. 33 and 35, 50, 51. Dialog. contr. Tryph. c. 7. Ad Græcos Cohort. c. 8. ⁷ *Σύντομος λόγος περί πιστεύσεως*. De Doct. Christi, book ii. c. 9. De Pastor. c. 2. Epist. xlii. ⁸ Epist. xcvi. (ad Hieronym.) De unitate Ecclesiæ, c. 3. vol. ix. p. 341. Paris, 1694.
⁹ Contrâ Gentes, vol. i. p. i. De Incarnat. Christi. (Parisii, 1627.)
¹⁰ Ad Constant. Aug. p. 244. De Trinit. book viii. (Parisii, 1652.)
¹¹ Comment. in Esaiam, vol. i. p. 379, (ed. Bened.) Hom. xxix. advers. Calumniantes S. Trinit. In Ethicis regul. xvi. lxxx. c. 22.
¹² Moralia in Job, præfat. c. 1. ¹³ Dialog. de Animâ et Resurr. vol. i. edit. Græcolat. p. 639. De cognit. Dei. cit. ab Euthymio in Panoplia. Tit. viii. ¹⁴ Dialog. i. *Ἀρρετ.* Dialog. ii. *Ἀσσυρ.* in Exod. Qu. xxvi. In Gen. Qu. xlv. ¹⁵ Book vii. cont. Jul. Glaphyrorum in Gen. book ii.

gians of the Reformation.¹ But we soon discovered that a mere enumeration of all these names would be only a vain appeal to the authority of men, and that to give them together with quotations would involve us in too extensive an exposition.

We now therefore hasten to produce as an authority the greatest of all theologians, even our Master, Jesus Christ; and to bespeak attention to him when he speaks in the Scriptures, and especially, when he quotes them. Among the most ardent defenders of their verbal inspiration, we know no man who has ever expressed himself with more reverence for the entirely divine authority and unchangeableness of their least expressions, than has the man Christ Jesus. And we hesitate not to say that if any modern writer seeking to establish a doctrine, will but imitate the blessed Saviour's manner of quoting the Bible, he would soon be ranked among the most zealous supporters of their *Theopneustia*.

¹ See Lardner, vol. ii. pp. 488, 495. Haldane, *The Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures*, pp. 167—176.

CHAPTER VI.

SCRIPTURAL PROOF OF THEOPNEUSTIA.

OPEN now the Scriptures. What do they say of their inspiration ?

SECTION I.—*All Scripture is Theopneustic.*

We shall commence by reproducing here the oft repeated passage (2 Tim. iii. 16): “**Holy Scripture** is wholly and entirely theopneustic ;” that is to say, wholly and entirely given by the Spirit, or by the breath of God.

This sentence, as we have shown, admits of no exception or restriction.

No exception : it is **ALL SCRIPTURE**, it is *all that which is written* (πᾶσα γραφή,) that is, the thoughts which have received the imprint of language. No restriction : all this writing is so far a work of God, as to be represented to us as uttered by the Divine breath, in the same manner that the words of a man are uttered by the breath of his mouth. The prophet is the mouth of the Lord.

The import of this declaration of St. Paul remains the same in the two constructions of which his words are susceptible, whether, as in our versions, the affirmation of the sentence and the understood verb (*all Scripture is divinely inspired and profitable, &c.*) be placed upon the word *θεόπνευστος* (divinely inspired); or whether, by connecting this verb with the following words, *θεόπνευστος* (*divinely inspired*) be taken for a determinate adjective, and the sentence rendered, (*all Scripture divinely inspired of God is profitable, &c.*) This latter construction would even give the apostle's declaration more force than the former. For thus his proposition necessarily connecting itself with *holy writings* (*τὰ ἱερὰ γράμματα*), of which he has just spoken, would take for granted as an admitted and incontestable principle, that to name the *holy writings* is assuredly thereby to designate the Scriptures inspired by God.

It will nevertheless be expedient further to set forth this truth by some other declaration from our holy books.

SECTION II.—*All Prophetic Words are given from God.*

St. Peter in his Second Epistle at the end of the first chapter, thus speaks:—"Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not at any time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

Remark on this passage :—

1. That *written* revelations of truth are here spoken of (προφητεία γραφής).
2. That those who have given these to us are called *holy men of God*.
3. That none of them *ever* (οὐ πότε) acted under the impulse, or influence, of the *will of man*.
4. That these holy men were *moved*, or *instigated*, by the *Holy Ghost*, to write and speak.
5. Finally, that their writings are termed *prophecy*.

It will be convenient, before proceeding farther, to define precisely the scriptural sense given to the words—*prophecy*, to *prophecy*, *prophet* (נביא); because this knowledge is indispensable to the investigation before us, and throws also much light upon the whole question.

Various and often incorrect meanings have been given to the biblical term *prophet*; but an attentive examination of the passages in which it is used will soon convince us that in the Scriptures it invariably designates “a man whose mouth utters the words of God.”

Among the Greeks this term was at first given only to the interpreter and organ of the *predictions* uttered in the temples (ἐξηγητὴς ἐνθεων μαντείων). This sense of it is fully explained in a passage of Plato's *Timæus*.¹ The most celebrated heathen prophets of antiquity were those of Delphos. They conducted the Pythoness to the sacred tripod, and

¹ Vol. ix. ed. Bipont. p. 392.

they were charged with the duty of interpreting or recording the oracles of the god. And it was only by an extension of this first sense, that the name of *prophet* was afterwards given among the Greeks to those poets who, commencing their strains by invoking Apollo and the muses, were considered to speak the language of the gods, under their immediate inspiration.

A prophet, in Scripture language then, is one into whose mouth God puts the words which he wills to make known to men; and it was in this sense God told Moses,¹ that "Aaron should be his prophet before Pharaoh," as he had said in the 16th verse of the fourth chapter—"He shall be to thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God."

Observe in Scripture how the prophets bear witness of the Spirit which caused them to speak, and to the full divine authority of their words: we always find in their language one unvarying definition of their office and inspiration. They speak, it is truly their voice which is heard, it is their person which is moved, it is also their mind which is affected, but their words are not from themselves only—they are at the same time the words of the Lord. "The Lord hath spoken it,"² say they continually; "I will open my mouth in the midst of them," said the Lord to his servant Ezekiel.³

¹ Exod. vii. 1. ² Micah iv. 4; Jer. ix. 12; xiii. 15; xxx. 4; 1. 1; li. 12; Isa. viii. 11; Amos iii. 1; Exod. iv. 30; Deut. xviii. 21, 22.

³ Ezek. xxix. 21; 2 Sam. xxiii. 1, 2.

"The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was on my tongue," said the royal Psalmist. The prophets announced what they were about to say, with "Hear the word of the Lord!" "Thus saith the Lord!"¹ "The word of the Lord came to me," say they often. The word of the Lord came unto Shemaiah—unto Nathan—and unto John in the wilderness.² "The word which came to Jeremiah by the Lord." "The word which was given to Jeremiah."³ "The burden of the word of the Lord by Malachi."⁴ "The word of the Lord which came to Hosea."⁵ "In the second year of Darius, came the word of the Lord by Haggai the prophet."⁶

This word descended upon these men of God at the good pleasure of his will, and often in the most unexpected manner.

It was thus that God when he sent Moses, said to him, "I will be with thy mouth;"⁷ and when he caused Balaam to speak, it is written that he "put a word in Balaam's mouth."⁸ The apostles also, in praying, quote from the Psalmist these words:—"It is THOU, Lord, WHO HAST SAID IT, BY THE MOUTH OF David thy servant."⁹ And St. Peter in addressing the assembled disciples, says, "Men and brethren, this Scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which

¹ Isa. xxviii. 14; Jer. x. 1; xvii. 20; xxii. 1. ² 1 Kings xii. 22; 1 Chron. xvii. 3; Luke iii. 2. ³ Jer. vii. 1; xi. 1; xviii. 1; xxi. 1; xxv. 1; xxvi. 1; xxvii. 1; xxx. 1; and numerous elsewhere; Isa. i. 2; Jer. i. 2, 9, 14; Ezek. iii. 4, 10, 11; Hosea i. 1, 2, &c. ⁴ Malachi i. 1. ⁵ Hosea i. 1, 2. ⁶ Haggai i. 1, 2. ⁷ Exod. iv. 12, 15. ⁸ ἐρέβαλεν (οἱ, LXX.) Numb. xxiii. 5. ⁹ Acts iv. 25.

the HOLY GHOST BY THE MOUTH OF DAVID spake before concerning Judas."¹ The same apostle also, standing in the Temple at Jerusalem in Solomon's Porch, thus addressed the people:—"The God of your fathers hath fulfilled the things which HE HAD SHOWED BEFOREHAND BY THE MOUTH OF ALL HIS PROPHETS."²

The apostle's testimony therefore is, that David in the Psalms, and all the prophets in their writings, whatever might be the pious emotions of their minds, were only the mouth of the Holy Ghost. It was David WHO SAID; it was the prophets WHO PROCLAIMED; but also it was God WHO SAID BY THE MOUTH of David his servant—it was God WHO HAD PROCLAIMED BY THE MOUTH of all his prophets.³

And we would desire that the following expression which so frequently occurs in the Gospels, and which is so conclusive, may be carefully examined with the Greek text; viz.—"That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, (ὕπὸ τοῦ Κυρίου διὰ τοῦ προφήτου,) saying,"⁴ &c.

It is in a sense entirely analogical that holy Scripture gives the name of prophets to those impostors among the Gentiles, who predicted lies in the temples of the false gods, whether they were vulgar knaves falsely pretending to have received revelations from God, or whether in reality they

¹ Acts i. 16. ² Acts iii. 18. ³ Acts iii. 18. ⁴ Matt. i. 22; ii. 5, 15, 23; iv. 14; viii. 17; xii. 17; xiii. 35; xxi. 4.

were the mouth of an occult power, of an evil angel, or of a Pythonic spirit.¹

And it is also in the same sense that St. Paul in quoting Epimenides, an epic poet and divining priest among the Cretans, spoke of him as "*one of their prophets*," because all the Greeks consulted him as an oracle, and Nicias went on the part of the Athenians, to escort him to Crete to purify their town; and Aristotle Strabo² Suidas³ and Diogenes Laertius⁴ tell us that he pretended to foretel future events, and to discover unknown things.

From all these authorities therefore, it is established, that in the language of Scripture the *prophecies* are "words of God put into the mouths of men."

It is therefore by an evident abuse that in vulgar language this word seems only to be understood as implying a miraculous *prediction*. The prophecies may reveal the past as well as the future: they denounce the judgments of God, they interpret his word, they sing his praise, they comfort his people, they exhort believers to holiness, and they testify of Jesus Christ.

And as "*no prophecy came by a will of man*,"⁵ a prophet, as we have already explained, was only a prophet at intervals, and *according as the Spirit gave him utterance*, (Acts ii. 4.)

A man sometimes prophesied without foreseeing

¹ Acts xvi. 16. See 1 Sam. xxviii. 7; 1 Chron. x. 13; Lev. xix. 26. Isa. viii. 19; xxix. 4. ² Geogr. book x. ³ In voce *Ἐπίμην*. ⁴ Vita Epimen. ⁵ 2 Pet. i. 21.

it; sometimes again without knowing it; and sometimes even without being willing to do it.

I have said without foreseeing it, and often even when he could least expect it: such was the old prophet of Bethel, (1 Kings xiii. 20.) I have said, without knowing it: such was Caiaphas, (John xi. 51.) And finally I have said, without being willing to do it: such was Balaam, when being three times prepared to curse Israel, he could only, three times in succession, give utterance to words of blessing. (Numb. xxiii. xxiv.)

We shall give further instances, in order to complete the demonstration of what a prophecy is in general, thereby to arrive at a fuller understanding of the action of God in what St. Peter calls the *written prophecy* (προφητείας γραφής).

We read in 11th chapter of Numbers (verses 25 to 29), that as soon as the Lord had caused the Spirit to fall upon the seventy elders, "they prophesied;" but it is added, "they did not so continue." The Spirit therefore came upon them at an unexpected moment; and after it had thus "spoken by them," and after "his word had been upon their tongue," (2 Sam. xxiii. 1, 2,) they ceased to possess this miraculous gift; they were prophets but for one day.

We read in the First Book of Samuel (chap. x.), with what unforeseen power the Spirit of the Lord came upon the youthful king Saul, at the moment when seeking the asses of his father he met a company of prophets coming down from the holy

place; who on hearing him prophesy among them, said one to another,—“What is this which is come unto the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets?”

We read in chapter xix. of the same book, something still more remarkable. Saul sends men to Rama to seize David; but as soon as they met Samuel and the company of prophets over whom he presided, the Spirit of the Lord comes upon these men of war, and “they also prophesy.” Saul sends yet other three, and they too become prophets. Finally, Saul repairs thither himself, and he likewise speaks as a prophet “all that day and all that night, in the presence of Samuel.” “The Spirit of God,” we are told, “was upon him also.”

But it is especially by an attentive study of the twelfth and fourteenth chapters of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, that an exact knowledge may be attained of the action of God, and the agency of man, in prophecy.

The apostle gives to the church at Corinth, rules by which they were to be guided in the use of this miraculous gift. His counsel will throw great light on this important subject. The following facts and principles will at once appear:—

1. The Holy Spirit at that time conferred upon believers, for their common benefit, very varied gifts, (xii. 7—10.) To one he gave the working of miracles; to another the gifts of healing; to another discerning of spirits; to another

divers kinds of tongues (who, in speaking them, understood them not himself); to another the interpretation of tongues; and lastly, to another *prophecy*,—that is to say, the ability to pronounce in his own language words dictated by God.

2. The selfsame Spirit distributed these miraculous gifts according to his own will.¹

3. These gifts were a proper subject for zeal and christian ambition (*ζηλοῦτε*, 1 Cor. xiv. 1, 39.) But the especial gift which was to be regarded as the most desirable, was *that of prophesying*; for a believer might speak in an unknown tongue without edifying any one, and this miracle was “rather useful to unbelievers than to saints;” whilst “the gift of prophecy edified, exhorted, and comforted.” (1 Cor. i. 3.)

4. This prophecy,—that is to say, those words that miraculously descended upon lips which the Holy Spirit had chosen for the office,—this prophecy appeared in various forms. Sometimes the Spirit gave a psalm; at others it was teaching; at others a revelation; and occasionally it was a miraculous interpretation of what others had miraculously uttered in unknown tongues!

5. In these prophecies there was plainly an operation of God and a work of man. There were the words of the Holy Ghost; but there were also the words of the prophet. It was God who spake; but in men, by men, and for men; and you might therein discern their utterance, perhaps also the

¹ Verse 11. See also Ephes. iv. 7, 11. Acts xix. 1—6.

nabitual turn of their style, and probably allusions to their own experience, actual position, and individuality.

6. These miraculous powers were prolonged in the primitive church during the extended career of the apostles. St. Paul who wrote his letter to the Corinthians twenty years after the death of Jesus Christ, speaks to them as of a common and habitual order of things which had existed amongst them from a certain period, and which was further to continue.

7. The prophets although they were the mouth of God to proclaim his words, were nevertheless not absolutely passive whilst they were prophesying.

"The spirits of the prophets (says St. Paul) are subject to the prophets" (1 Cor. xiv. 32); that is to say, whilst these men of God had the prophetic word on their lips, they had nevertheless power in the repressive action of their own will, to prevent its going forth; something similar to a man being able to suspend at will the otherwise almost involuntary action of respiration. Thus, for example, if a revelation be given "to one that sitteth by," the one who may be speaking is required "to be silent, to sit down, and to let him who has just received a revelation speak."

Let us now apply these principles and facts to the prophecy of Scripture (*τῇ προφητείᾳ γραφῆς*), and to that passage in St. Peter's Epistle, for the explanation of which we have set them forth.

"No prophecy of Scripture (he observes) is of any private interpretation, for prophecy came not

at any time by a will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." (1 Pet. i. 20, 21.)

Here then we have the full and entire inspiration of the Scriptures clearly established by the apostle; here we have SCRIPTURE identified with those prophecies which we have just defined. "It came not by the will of man;" it is entirely dictated by the Holy Spirit; it gives us the true words of God; it is entirely (*ἐνθεος* and *θεόπνευστος*) given by the breath of God.

Who would therefore after such declarations dare to maintain that the expressions of Scripture are not inspired? They are the WRITTEN PROPHECIES, (*πᾶσα προφητεία γραφῆς.*) Only one solitary difficulty can then be opposed to our conclusion. The evidence and the reasoning on which it rests are of such a character, that there is no escaping, save by this objection. We admit, it will be said, that *the written prophecy* (*προφητεία γραφῆς*) has, without contradiction, been composed by that power of the Holy Spirit which moved in the prophets; but the rest of the book, the Epistles, Gospels, Acts, Proverbs, the Books of Kings, and as much else as is purely historical, has no claim to be placed in the same rank.

Let us here pause before replying, and ascertain how far our argument has brought us.

It ought already to be fully acknowledged that at least *every part of the Scriptures* termed PROPHECY, of whatever character it may be, has been *entirely*

dictated by God; so that the very
the thoughts have been given by h

But now who will agree to c
distinction between any one of
Bible and all its other parts?
contains given by prophecy? I
that is contained therein has b
by God: this is what we shall

SECTION III.—*All the Scriptu ment are prop!*

And in the first place, a
indirectly called THE WORD
alone ought to suffice to show
commenced his prophecies b
and the earth to give ear, l
spoken,¹ the same summons
us as coming forth from all
because they are collective
God." "Hear, O heavens!
for the Lord hath spoken!"

We should be unable to i
single passage which would
one solitary clause of the
than the rest. To say that t
is "the word of God," is it
the sentences of which it
dictated by him?

Now, not only is the v

¹ Isa. .

(προφητείας γραφῆς) or from the inspired word (ἐν θεοῦ λόγου—γραφῆς θεόπνευστου)?

Would it be Moses? But what is there more holy and more divine, throughout the Old Testament, than the writings of this man of God?—He was such a prophet, that his sacred books are set above all others, and pre-eminently called **THE LAW**. “The law of the Lord is perfect” (Psalm xix. 7). “The words of the Lord are pure words; as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times” (Psalm xii. 6).—He was such a prophet, that he only compares himself with the Son of God:—“This is that Moses, which said unto the children of Israel, A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, **LIKE UNTO ME**; hear him” (Acts vii. 37).—He was such a prophet, that he commonly preceded his commands with the words “Thus saith the Lord!”—He was such a prophet, that God said to him “Who hath made man’s mouth? have not I the Lord? Now therefore go; and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say” (Exod. iv. 11, 12).—Finally, he was such a prophet, that it is written, “And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face” (Deut. xxxiv. 10).

What other portion of the Old Testament would you then exclude from the prophetic Scriptures? Would it be the second—that which Jesus Christ calls *the Prophets*, and which includes all the Old Testament, with the exception of Moses and the Psalms,

and sometimes with exception of Moses only ? It is well worthy of notice that Jesus Christ and the apostles, and all the people, habitually call all the authors of the Old Testament by the name *Prophets*. To designate the entire Scripture they usually said, "Moses and the Prophets." (Luke xxiv. 25, 27, 44; Matt. v. 17; vii. 12; xi. 13. Luke xvi. 16, 29, 31; xx. 42; Acts i. 20; iii. 21, 22; vii. 35, 37; viii. 28; xxvi. 22, 27; xxviii. 23; Rom. i. 2; iii. 21; x. 5, &c. &c.) Jesus Christ calls all their books *the Prophets*. They were prophets.—Hence Joshua was a prophet;—the authors of the Chronicles were prophets;—they, as Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, and all the others down to Malachi, were the prophets of Jehovah.

They, therefore, all wrote *prophetic Scriptures* (προφητεῖαν γραφῆς); all, words of which St. Peter tells us that none of them "came by a will of man;" all, those (ἱερὰ γράμματα) "holy epistles," which the apostle declares to be divinely inspired.¹ The Lord hath said of them all, as of Jeremiah, "Behold! I have put my words into thy mouth;" and as of Ezekiel, "Son of man, all my words that I shall speak unto thee, receive in thine heart, and hear with thine ears; and go get thee to them of the captivity, unto the children of thy people, and speak unto them, and tell them, THUS SAITH THE LORD GOD, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear."²

¹ 2 Tim. iii. 16.² Jer. i. 1, 2, 9.³ Ezek. iii. 10, 11.

And that all the sentences and words were given unto them by God, is manifestly shown by one fact, which is repeatedly related, and which the study of their writings frequently brings to our notice, namely, they were charged to transmit to the church oracles whose signification was yet to remain concealed from themselves. Daniel, for instance, declares more than once, that he could not understand the prophetic import of the words which went forth from his own lips, or were traced by his pen.¹ The typical character impressed by God on all the events of primitive history, were not to be understood until many centuries after the existence of those who were charged with their first record; and the Holy Ghost declares to us that the prophets, after having penned their sacred pages, applied themselves to study them with the same reverent attention as they would the other Scriptures; "searching to understand WHAT THE SPIRIT of CHRIST which was in them had FORETOLD concerning the sufferings and future glory of the Messiah."² Behold these men of God studiously bending over their own writings, pondering therein the words of God, and the mind of God: but will this excite your astonishment; since what they have just written for the elect of the earth, for principalities and heavenly powers,³ is about the advent and the glory of the Son of God; "things which angels desire to look into?"

So much for Moses and the Prophets; but what

¹ Dan. xii. 4, 8, 9.

² 1 Pet. i. 10, 11, 12.

³ Eph. iii. 10, 11.

will you say respecting the Psalms? Would these be, less than all the rest, the gift of the Spirit of prophecy? Are not the authors of the Psalms always called *prophets*?¹ And if they are sometimes, like Moses, distinguished from the other prophets, is it not evidently to assign them a more eminent place? David was a prophet, St. Peter tells us (Acts ii. 30). Hear what he says of himself: "The Spirit of the Lord SPAKE BY ME, and HIS WORD WAS ON MY TONGUE" (2 Sam. xxiii. 1, 2). What David wrote, even his least words, he wrote SPEAKING BY THE HOLY GHOST, says our Lord. (Mark xii. 36.) The apostles also, in quoting him, (in their prayer) have been careful to say, "This Scripture must needs be fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake," &c. (Acts i. 16.) "It is thou, Lord, who by the mouth of thy servant David, hast said," &c. (Acts iv. 25.) What shall I more say? These Psalms are so entirely dictated by the Spirit, that Jesus Christ himself calls them by the name of LAW;² all their words formed a law: the least of them was from God. "Is it not written in YOUR LAW?" said Jesus in quoting them, and (as we shall presently have to show) in quoting them FOR A SINGLE SENTENCE.

All the Old Testament is therefore, in the scriptural sense of the expression, a WRITTEN PROPHECY (*προφητεία γραφή*). It is consequently fully inspired by God; since, according to the testi-

¹ Matt. iii. 35. Psalm (for Asaph) lxxviii. 2. ² John x. 34. (See Ps. lxxxii. 6.) John xii. 34. (See Ps. lxxxix. 36.)

mony of Zacharias, "it is God who has spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets, which have been since the beginning of time;"¹ and according to St. Peter, it was moved by the Holy Ghost that they spake.²

It is true that, thus far, our reasoning and the evidence upon which it is grounded, only directly relate to the books of the Old Testament; and it may be objected to us that we have as yet proved nothing in respect to the New.

Previously to meeting this objection, we will propose the question, whether it would be probable that the Lord intending to give his people successive revelations of his will, would nevertheless have allowed the most recent and most important of these to be inferior to those which preceded? We will ask whether it would be rational to imagine that the first Testament, which only contained "the shadow of things to come" should have been throughout its contents dictated by God, whilst the second Testament which exhibits to us the great object to which all these shadows had reference, and which records to us the work, character, person, and words, of the Son of God, would be less inspired than the first? We will ask whether it can be believed that the Epistles and Gospels, destined to revoke several of the ordinances of Moses and the prophets, would be less divine than Moses and the Prophets; and that the Old Testament should

¹ Luke i. 70. ² 2 Pet. i. 21. See also Matt. i. 22; xxii. 43. Mark xii. 36.

be throughout and entirely a word from God, and yet that it should be replaced, or at least modified and consummated by a book partly the word of man and partly that of God !

But we are under no necessity to have recourse to these powerful inductions, to assist in establishing the prophetic inspiration of the Gospel, and even its superiority to Moses and the Prophets.

SECTION IV.—*All the Scriptures of the New Testament are prophetical.*

Scripture invariably places the writers of the New Testament in the same rank with the prophets of the Old; and even when it distinguishes between them, it is always to put the latter above the former, as far as one word from God is superior (not in divinity certainly neither in dignity, but in authority,) to the word which preceded it.

We would beg especial attention to the following passage of the apostle Peter. It is important, because it shows us that whilst the apostles were yet living, the book of the New Testament was already almost entirely formed, to make one collective whole with that of the Old. It was twenty or thirty years after the Pentecost that St. Peter with delight quotes "ALL THE EPISTLES OF PAUL, his beloved brother;" and speaks of them as "sacred epistles" which then in his time were a part of the "holy writings" (*ἱερῶν γράμματος*), which were to be classed with "THE OTHER SCRIPTURES," (*ὡς καὶ*

τὰς λοιπὰς γραφάς). He assigns to them the same rank, and he declares that ignorant men may wrest them to their own destruction. The following is this important passage :—"Even as our beloved brother Paul also, according to the wisdom given unto him, hath written unto you, as *he has done* in ALL HIS EPISTLES, in which he speaks of these things, among which are some hard to be understood, which ignorant and unestablished men wrest as they do also THE OTHER SCRIPTURES, to THEIR OWN PERDITION."¹

The apostle in the second verse of the same chapter had already classed himself with the other prophets, in the same rank and invested with the same authority as the sacred writers of the Old Testament, where he says, "Be mindful of the words which were spoken BEFORE by the HOLY PROPHETS, and of the commandments which ye have received FROM US, who are APOSTLES of the Lord and Saviour."

The writings of the apostles were therefore what the writings of the Old Testament were ; and since these latter are a WRITTEN PROPHECY, the former are not less so.

But we have said that Scripture goes beyond this, in the rank which it assigns to the writers of the NEW COVENANT. It teaches us to consider them as superior even to those of the Old in regard to the importance of their *mission*, the glory of the *promises* which have been made to them, the

¹ 2 Pet. iii. 15, 16.

greatness of the *gifts* which were conferred upon them, and finally by the eminence of the *rank* which is assigned to them.

1. In the first place let us ascertain what was their *mission*, as compared with that of the ancient prophets; and in this it will at once be seen that their inspiration could not be inferior to that of their predecessors.

When Jesus sent the apostles whom he had chosen (it is written), he said to them:—"Go ye and teach all nations, instructing them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo! I AM WITH YOU unto the end of the world. Amen."¹ "Ye will receive the Holy Ghost which shall come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses for me in Jerusalem, in all Judea, in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth."² "Peace be with you! As my Father HATH SENT ME, even so SEND I YOU."³

Such was their mission. They were *the sent* (ἀποστόλοι) immediately from the Son of God; they went to all nations; they had the guarantee that their Master would be ever present with the testimony which they were to bear to him in the holy Scriptures. Were they then less in need of inspiration to go to the uttermost parts of the earth, than the prophets to go to Israel, to instruct solely the Jewish people? Had they not to promulgate all the doctrines ordinances and mysteries of the kingdom of God? Had they not committed to

¹ Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. ² Acts i. 8. ³ John xx. 21.

them the keys of the heavenly kingdom ; insomuch that whatever they bound or loosed on earth, should be bound or loosed in heaven ?¹ To this end had not Jesus Christ expressly conferred upon them the Holy Ghost : that those sins which they remitted or retained, should accordingly be remitted or retained ? Had he not breathed upon them, saying " Receive ye the Holy Ghost ? " Had they not to reveal the unheard-of character of the " Word made flesh," and of the Creator humbling himself, even to taking the form of a creature, and to death upon a cross ? Had they not to record his incomparable words ? Had they not to exercise in the earth the incommunicable and miraculous functions of his representatives, his ambassadors, as if it had been Christ speaking by them ?² Were they not called to a glory such as " in the last and great regeneration, when the Son of Man shall be seated on the throne of his glory, they also will be seated on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel ? " ³ If therefore the prophetic spirit was necessary to the first men of God, to show the Messiah in shadows, was it not far more necessary to these latter, to exhibit him in light, and so to set him forth as crucified among us,⁴ that whosoever rejected them rejected him, and whosoever received them received him ?⁵ By these features let it be judged what must have been the inspiration of the New Testament as compared

¹ Matt. xviii. 18 ; xvi. 19.² 2 Cor. v. 20.³ Matt. xix. 28.⁴ Gal. iii. 1.⁵ Matt. x. 40 ; Luke x. 16.

with the Old; and say whether whilst the latter was fully and entirely prophetical, the New can be inferior to it.

2. But this is not all; let us hear *the promises* which were made to them for the accomplishment of such a work. Human language cannot more powerfully express the most absolute inspiration. These promises were especially addressed to them on three important occasions: in the first place when they were sent for the first time to preach the kingdom of God;¹ in the second place when Jesus himself publicly preached the gospel before an innumerable multitude of people;² and in the third place when he pronounced his final denunciations against Jerusalem and the Jewish people.³

“When they deliver you up, take no thought HOW OR WHAT THING ye shall speak (πῶς ἢ τί); for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak: for it is NOT YE that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which SPEAKETH IN YOU.”

“When they bring you before councils and magistrates, take no thought HOW ye shall speak, nor of WHAT ye shall answer in your defence, nor of WHAT ye shall say; for the HOLY GHOST will teach you IN THAT VERY HOUR what ye ought to say.”

“Do not be troubled beforehand about what ye shall say, NEITHER PREMEDITATE; but ALL shall be given you in that hour,” says Jesus; “for IT IS NOT YE THAT SPEAK, but the Holy Ghost.”

On these several occasions the Lord gives his

¹ Matt. x. 19, 20. ² Mark xiii. 11; Luke xx. 14, 15. ³ Luke xii. 12.

disciples assurance that *the most entire inspiration* shall regulate their language in the most difficult and important seasons of their ministry. When they should have to speak before princes they were to feel no disquietude; they were not even to *premeditate* or *think* thereon; because it would be *immediately given to them* by God, not only *what* they should speak, but also *the words* in which they should express themselves—not only *τίς*, but *τίς λαλήσονται* (Matt. x. 19, 20). They were to rest entirely upon him;—what they ought to say would be *entirely* given—given *by Jesus*—given *in the very hour*—and given in such manner and plenitude that they could say it was NO LONGER THEY, but the Holy Ghost, THE SPIRIT OF THEIR FATHER, which spoke in them,¹ and that then it was not only an irresistible energy which was given them—it was A MOUTH!²

“Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate beforehand what ye shall answer; for I will give you A MOUTH and wisdom which none of your adversaries shall be able to resist.”

It will then (as with the ancient prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel,) be the Holy Spirit speaking by them, as “God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.” In one sense indeed it will be *they* who speak, but it will be the Holy Ghost (Luke xii. 12) who “shall teach them in the same hour what they ought to say;” so that in another sense it will be *the Spirit* himself speaking by their lips.

¹ Matt. x. 20; Mark xiii. 11.

² Luke xxi. 14, 15.

We ask whether it is possible in any language to express more absolutely the most entire inspiration, and to declare more unequivocally that even the very words were then supplied by God and given to the apostles?

It is very true that in these promises it is not directly a question of the aid which the apostles should receive as writers, but rather what they were to expect when they should be brought before priests, governors, and kings. Yet, is it not evident that if the most entire inspiration were assured to them¹ on passing occasions, to close the mouths of some wicked men, to avert the dangers of a day, and to serve the interests of a fleeting hour—if in these cases it was promised them that even the words of their answers should be supplied to them, is it not sufficiently evident that this same aid could not be refused to these very men, when like the ancient prophets, they should carry on the book of God, in order to transmit to future ages the laws of the kingdom of heaven, and to pourtray the glory of Christ and the scenes of eternity? Could any one imagine that the same men who before Ananias, Festus, or Nero, were so far “the mouth of the Holy Ghost,” that then it was no longer “they” who spoke, but the “Holy Ghost,” should, when they wrote “the eternal gospel,” relapse into ordinary beings, merely enlightened, denuded of their preceding inspiration, no longer speaking by the Holy Ghost, and thenceforth using only words

¹ Luke xii. 12.

which man's wisdom taught! (θελήματι ἀνθρώπου, καὶ ἐν διδακτοῖς ἀνθρωπίνης σοφίας λόγοις.¹) Such a supposition is inadmissible.

Behold them commencing their apostolic ministry on the day of Pentecost; observe the *gifts* which they received;² tongues of fire descend upon their heads; they are filled with the Holy Ghost; they leave their upper room; and all the people hear them proclaim in fifteen different languages the wonderful works of God. They spake AS THE SPIRIT GAVE THEM UTTERANCE; they spake (it is said) THE WORD OF GOD (ἐλάλουν τὸν λόγον τοῦ Θεοῦ). It must certainly be that *the words* of these foreign languages were given to them, as well as *the things* they uttered; the expression as well as the idea; the τί as well as the πῶς (Matt. x. 19; Luke x. 11.) Can it be believed that the Spirit would be concerned to dictate to them all they ought to say while preaching in the corners of the streets,—words which passed away with the sound of their voice and which at most only met the ears of some assembled thousands; and yet when these same men came to write for all the people on the face of the whole earth, and for all ages of the church, the “living oracles of God,” they would find themselves without this aid? Will it be believed that after having been more than prophets for the object of preaching in public places that they should become less than prophets, and merge into mere ordinary men when they took up the pen

¹ 2 Pet. i. 21; 1 Cor. ii. 13.

² Acts ii. 2, 11; iv. 31.

to complete the Book of Prophecies, write their Gospels, Epistles, and the Book of their Revelations? How obvious is the inadmissibility of such a supposition!

4. But we have something to add still more simple and forcible: we refer to the *rank* which is assigned to them; and we might confine ourselves to this fact alone, after having spoken of the prophets of the Old Testament. It is this,—that the apostles were ALL PROPHETS, and MORE THAN PROPHETS. Their writings are WRITTEN PROPHECIES (*προφητεία γραφῆς*), as much and more than those of the Old Testament; and we are thus brought to the conclusion, that all Scripture in the New Testament as in the Old, is inspired by God, even in its least parts.

I have said that the apostles were all prophets. They frequently declare it. But not to multiply quotations needlessly, we will be content to refer to the two following passages of the apostle Paul.

The first is addressed to the Ephesians (iii. 4, 5). “You can,” writes he to them, “by reading WHAT I HAVE WRITTEN before in few words ascertain the understanding which I have in the mystery of Christ; a mystery which in other generations was not made known unto the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to his holy apostles and prophets.”

It is likewise of the same mystery, and of the writings of the same prophets, which this apostle speaks in the second of the passages alluded to;

I mean the last chapter of his Epistle to the Romans.¹

“Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest by the means of **PROPHETIC WRITINGS** (διὰ τε γραφῶν προφητικῶν), according to the commandment of the everlasting God made known to all nations for the obedience of faith. To God only wise be glory through Jesus Christ, for ever. Amen!”

Here then we have the authors of the New Testament called **PROPHETS**, and their writings called **PROPHETIC WRITINGS** (γραφὰὶ προφητικαὶ), which is the equivalent of the words, προφητεία γραφῆς, of St. Peter. And since we have already seen that “no prophecy came by the will of him who uttered it, but that holy men of God spake as they were moved and instigated by the Holy Ghost;” the prophets of the New Testament have therefore spoken like those of the Old, and according to the commandment of the eternal God. They were all prophets.²

But even this is not enough; for we have said, they were **MORE THAN PROPHETS**. This also has been remarked by the learned Michaëlis.³ In spite of his lax principles respecting the inspiration

¹ Rom. xvi. 25, 27. ² See further, Luke xi. 49. **Ephesians**, ii. 20; iii. 5; iv. 11. **Gal.** i. 12. **1 Peter** i. 12. **1 Corin.** xii. 23. **1 Thess.** ii. 15. ³ Introduction, vol. i. p. 118, Fran. edit.

of a part of the New Testament, he has not failed to observe this. It is clear, according to him, from the context, that in the sentence where Jesus Christ speaks of John the Baptist (Matt. xi. 9, 11), the words *greater* and *least* in the 11th verse, only apply to the name of *prophet* which precedes them in the 9th. So that the Lord Jesus there declares that if John the Baptist is the *greatest of prophets*, if he is even *more than a prophet*, yet *the least of the prophets of the New Testament* is nevertheless *greater than John the Baptist*; that is to say, greater than the greatest of the Old Testament prophets.¹

Again,—this superiority of the *apostles and prophets* of the New Testament is more than once attested to us in the apostolic writings. Wherever mention is made of the several offices established in the church, the apostles are set above the prophets. Thus for instance in a very remarkable passage of Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians, in which the apostle applies himself to make known to us the gradations of excellence and dignity which mark the various miraculous powers conferred by God in the primitive church, he thus speaks:—"God has set in the church, *first*, APOSTLES; *secondarily*, PROPHETS; *thirdly*, TEACHERS; after these, miracles, gifts of healing, helps, governments, diversities of tongues."²

In the 11th verse of the fourth chapter to the Ephesians, he sets the apostles above the prophets.

¹ Ibid. and Luke vii. 28.

² 1 Cor. xii. 28.

In 2 Cor. v. 20, he calls the apostles **AMBASADORS** and **PROPHETS**; and in 1 Cor. xiv., he places himself above the prophets which God had raised up in that church. He desires that each one of those who had truly received the Holy Spirit, would employ his gifts to recognise in the words of the apostle the commandments of the Most High; and he is so assured that what he writes is given by the inspiration of God, that after having laid down **SOME PRECEPTS** for the churches, and finished with words which inspiration from on high could only authorize, viz. "*It is thus that I ORDAIN in all the churches ;*" he does more—he proceeds to rank himself **ABOVE THE PROPHETS**; or rather, as a prophet himself, he calls upon the Spirit of prophecy in them to receive the words of Paul as the words of the Lord, and concludes in these remarkable terms: "**CAME the word of God OUT FROM YOU ?**" "**If any man THINK HIMSELF to be A PROPHET, or a man HAVING THE SPIRIT,**¹ let him acknowledge that the things which I WRITE TO YOU are the **COMMANDMENTS OF THE LORD.**"

The writings of the apostles are therefore (like those of the ancient prophets) "**the commandments of the everlasting God ;**" they are written prophecies (*προφητεία γραφής*), as much as the Psalms, and Moses, and the Prophets (Luke xxiv. 44); and all the writers of the New Testament have been enabled to say with St. Paul, "**CHRIST SPEAKING IN ME**" (2 Cor. xiii. 3; 1 Thess. ii. 13); my word is the

¹ 1 Cor. xiv. 37.

word of God, and the instruction which I give was taught to me by the Holy Ghost (1 Cor. ii. 13), as much as David before them had said, "The Spirit of the Lord has spoken by me, and his word was on my tongue" (2 Sam. xxiii. 2).

Hear them also when they speak of themselves. Would it be possible to declare more clearly than they have done, that the words as well as the subject have been given to them by God? With respect to ourselves (say they), *we have the mind of Christ* (1 Cor. ii. 16). "For this cause thank we God without ceasing, because when ye received the word which ye heard of us, WHICH IS FROM GOD, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, THE WORD OF GOD" (1 Thess. ii. 13). "Thus therefore, he that rejects us, rejects NOT A MAN, but God, who hath even put his Holy Spirit in us" (1 Thess. iv. 8).

Such then, finally, is the book of the New Testament. It is like that of the Old Testament Scripture, the word of prophets, and of prophets even greater than all those who had preceded them; so that as Michaëlis¹ has well observed, an epistle which commences thus, "Paul an apostle of Jesus Christ,"² more forcibly attests to us its divine authority and prophetic inspiration, than could have done even the writings of the most illustrious prophets of the Old Testament, when they open with these words, "Thus saith the Lord;"³

¹ Introduct. vol. i. p. 118, 119, &c. Fran. edit. ² Rom. i. 1. Gal. i. 1; 1 Cor. i. 1; 1 Pet. i. 1; 2 Pet. i. 1. ³ Isa. xl. 1; lvi. 1, *et passim*.

"The vision of Isaiah:" "The word which Isaiah, the son of Amos, saw:" "The words of Jeremiah: to whom the word of the Lord came;" "Hear the word of the Lord:" or other similar expressions. And if there be in the New Testament some books in which similar prefatory expressions are not found, their *Teopneustia* is not more compromised than that of any book of the Old Testament (the second or ninety-fifth psalm for instance);¹ which, although they bear not at their commencement the name of the prophet who composed them, are not the less quoted as divine by the Lord Jesus and his apostles.

It may sometimes have been objected that Luke and Mark were not, properly speaking, apostles, and that consequently they had not received the same inspiration as the other sacred writers of the New Testament. They were not apostles, it is true; but they were certainly prophets, and thus even greater than the greatest of the Old Testament. (Luke vii. 26, 28.)

Without insisting here upon the ancient traditions,² which say of both that they were of the number of the seventy disciples whom Jesus had first sent to preach in Judæa, or at least of the one hundred and twenty who received the outpouring of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, is it not known that the apostles had received the power of conferring by the imposition of hands miraculous

¹ Isa. i. 1: ii. 2. *et cetera.* ² Jer. i. 1. 2. ³ Acts iv. 15; xiii. 31. Heb. i. 5: iii. 7: iv. 3, 7: v. 5. ⁴ Epiphan. Hæres. 51. and others.—Origen. de rectâ in Deum Fide. Doroth. in Synopsi. Procop. Diacon. apud Bolland. 25 April.

gifts to all who had believed, and that they exercised this power in all the countries and towns through which they journeyed? And since Luke and Mark among so many other prophets were fellow-helpers chosen by Paul and Peter, is it not manifest that these two apostolic men would necessarily invoke upon such associates the gifts which they had elsewhere bestowed upon so many others who had believed? Do we not see Peter and John, in the first place, going down to Samaria to confer these gifts upon believers in that city; afterwards Peter coming and bestowing them in Cæsarea upon the heathen who had heard the word in the house of the centurion Cornelius?¹ Do we not see St. Paul distributing them abundantly among the brethren at Corinth; on all those at Ephesus; and on those at Rome?² Do we not see him, previously to employing his beloved son Timothy as a fellow-labourer, cause spiritual powers to descend upon him?³ And is it not manifest that St. Peter would do as much for Mark,⁴ as St. Paul for his companion Luke?⁵ Silas, whom St. Paul had taken to accompany him, (as he also took Luke and John, whose surname was Mark,) Silas was a prophet at Jerusalem.⁶ Prophets abounded in all the primitive churches. We are told of several who went down from Jerusalem to Antioch;⁷ a great number were

¹ Acts viii. 15, 17; x. 45. ² Acts xix. 6, 7; 1 Cor. xii. 28; xiv.; Rom. i. 11; xv. 19, 29. ³ 1 Tim. iv. 14; 2 Tim. i. 6. ⁴ 1 Pet. v. 13. ⁵ Acts xiii. 1; xvi. 10; xxvii. 1; Rom. xvi. 21; Col. iv. 14; 2 Tim. iv. 11; Philem. 24; 2 Cor. viii. 18. ⁶ Acts xv. 32. ⁷ Acts xi. 19.

in Corinth: Jonas and Silas were prophets at Jerusalem: Agabus in Judæa: the four virgin daughters of Philip the Evangelist, prophesied in Cæsarea;¹ in the church at Antioch, several of the faithful were prophets and teachers,² among others, Barnabas (Paul's first companion), Simeon, Manaen, Son of Tannus himself, and finally Lucius of Cyrene, whom Paul (in the Epistle to the Romans) calls his relation,³ and whom, in the Epistle to the Colossians, he styles "*Luke the Physician*;"⁴ in a word, the selfsame Luke whom the ancient fathers have indifferently named Luke, Lucius, and Lucanus.

It becomes therefore sufficiently evident by these facts, that St. Luke and St. Mark were at least in the rank of those prophets whom the Lord had so numerously raised up in all the churches of the Jews and Gentiles; and that among others they were chosen by the Holy Ghost to write conjointly with the apostles three of the sacred books of the New Testament.

But furthermore, (and let it be especially remarked,) this prophetic authority of St. Mark and St. Luke is very far from resting merely upon suppositions: it rests upon the testimony even of the apostles of Jesus Christ. It must not be forgotten that it was under the superintendence of these men of God, that the divine canon of the Scriptures of the New Testament was collected and transmitted

¹ 1 Cor. xiv. 31, 39. ² Acts xi. 28; xxi. 9, 10. ³ Acts xiii. 1, 2.
⁴ Rom. xvi. 21. ⁵ Col. iv. 14.

to all the churches. By a remarkable providence of God, the lives of most of the apostles were prolonged through many years. St. Peter and St. Paul edified the church of God during upwards of thirty-four years after the resurrection of their Master. St. John even continued his ministry in the province of Asia, in the centre of the Roman empire, more than thirty years after the death of those apostles. The book of Acts, which was written by St. Luke subsequently to his Gospel,¹ had already been in the church's possession long (at least ten years) previously to the martyrdom of St. Paul. Now St. Paul, long before going to Rome, had spread the gospel from Jerusalem and round about unto Illyricum;² the apostles were in continual correspondence with the Christians of all countries; they were daily burthened with the care of all the churches.³ St. Peter, in his Second Epistle, written to the general congregations of God, had already spoken to them of ALL THE EPISTLES of St. Paul, as integral with the Old Testament. And during upwards of half a century, all the christian churches were formed and governed under the supervision of these men of God. It is therefore with the consent, and under the prophetic rule of these apostles, authorized to bind and loose, and to be, after Christ, the twelve foundations of the universal church, that the *cánon of the Scriptures* has been formed, and it is from them that the new people of God received "the living oracles," to

¹ Acts i. 1.² Rom. xv. 19.³ 2 Cor. xi. 28.

transmit them unto us.¹ And it is thus that the Gospel of Luke, that of Mark, and the book of the Acts, have with one accord been received to the same honour and with the same submission, as the apostolical books of Matthew, Paul, Peter, and John. These books have therefore the same authority with us as all others; and we are required to receive them equally, “not as the word of men, but as they are in truth, the word of God, working effectually in all those that believe.”²

These considerations, we venture to believe, will suffice to demonstrate how ill-founded is the distinction which Michaelis³ and some other German scholars, have essayed to establish between these two evangelists and the other writers of the New Testament. It even appears to us that to preclude such a supposition, Luke has been mindful to place at the head of his Gospel the four verses which serve as its preface. In fact, he studies to place the authenticity and divinity of his own treatise in contrast with the incertitude and human character of the narratives *which many persons* (πολλοὶ) *had undertaken to compose* (ἐπεχείρησαν ἀνατάξασθαι) on evangelical facts; facts (he adds) *rendered perfectly certain among us*; that is, amongst the apostles and prophets of the New Testament (τῶν πεπληροφορημένων ἐν ἡμῖν πραγμάτων), the original words signifying the utmost degree of certainty, as may be seen Rom. iv. 21; xiv. 5. *And on this* (observes Luke)

¹ Acts vii. 38; Rom. iii. 2. ² 1 Thess. ii. 13. ³ Introduction, vol. i. pp. 112—129.

it seemed good to ME, who have acquired FROM ON HIGH a perfect knowledge of all,¹ to write unto thee in order.

St. Luke had acquired this knowledge from ON HIGH; that is to say, by "the wisdom which comes from above," and, "which had been given to him." It is very true, that the last expression in the passage is ordinarily understood as if it signified *from the beginning*, and as if, instead of the word *ἄνωθεν* (*from on high*), there was here the same word *ἀπ' ἀρχῆς* (*from the beginning*), which is found in the second verse. But it appears to us that the opinions of Erasmus, Gomar, Henry, Lightfoot, and other commentators, ought to be preferred as more natural, and that the word *ἄνωθεν* must be taken in the same sense in which St. John and St. James used it when they said, "Every perfect gift comes *from above*." (James i. 17.) "Thou couldest have no power against me, if it were not given thee *from above*." (John xix. 11.) "Except a man be born *from above* (John's Gospel, iii. 3, marginal reading of the English version) he cannot see the kingdom of God." "The wisdom which comes *from above* is first pure," &c. (James iii. 15, 17.)

The prophet Luke therefore had "obtained from above a perfect knowledge of all the things

¹ Παρακολουθηκότι. Thus Demosthenes, De Coronâ, vol. 53. Παρακολουθηκοῖς τοῖς πράγμασιν ἀπ' ἀρχῆς. Theophrast. Char. Proem. 4. Σὺν δὲ παρακολουθήσαι καὶ εἰδῆσαι, εἰ ὁρθῶς λέγω. Josephus, in the first lines of his book against Appion, opposes this very word τὸν παρακολουθηκότα (*diligenter assecutum*) to τῷ πυνθανομένῳ (*sciscitanti ab aliis*.)

which Jesus began both to do and to teach until the day in which he was taken up."

Nevertheless, whatever translation of these words may be preferred, it is by other arguments that we have shown that Luke and Mark were prophets: and that their writings, transmitted to the church by the authority of the apostles, are themselves incorporated with those of the apostles, and with all the other prophetic books of the eternal word of God.

To this point then our argument has brought us: and we are bound to acknowledge it on the authority of holy Scripture itself: viz.—In the first place, that the *Intelligencia* of the words of the prophets was entire: that the Holy Spirit spake by them; and that the eternal word was on their tongue. And secondly, that all which has been written in the Bible, having been written by prophecy, all the sacred books are *holy writings* (*ιερά γράμματα*), *written prophecies* (*προφητεία γραφῆς*), and *writings divinely inspired* (*γραφαὶ θεόπνευστοι*). Its entire contents are from God.

We would, nevertheless, here recur to what we have more than once had occasion to remark: viz.—That it is not necessary to attribute to the prophets of the Old or New Testament, a state of excitement and enthusiasm which prevented due control of their faculties: such a thought on the contrary must have no place in the mind. The ancient church put so great importance upon this principle, that under the reign of the Emperor Commodus, according to Eusebius, Miltiades (the

illustrious author of an apologetic christian treatise) "composed a book (against Montanus and the false prophets of Phrygia,) expressly to establish" "*that true prophets ought to be masters of themselves, and not to speak in ecstasy.*"¹ The action of God was exercised upon them without entirely taking them out of their ordinary state. "The spirits of the prophets," says St. Paul, "are subject to the prophets."² Their intellectual faculties at those seasons, were directed, and not suspended. They knew, they felt, they willed, they remembered, they understood, and they approved. They could say, "It seemed good to me" to write; and, like the apostles, "It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us"³ to write. And then the words were given to them as well as the thoughts; for, after all, the words are in themselves only second thoughts which have relation to language and to the employment of suitable expressions. It is neither more easy nor more difficult to explain the gift of the former than that of the latter.

There is however in holy Scripture, as respects *Theopneustia*, something which strikes us if it be possible still more forcibly than all the *declarations* of the apostles, and of Jesus Christ himself, and this is—their example.

¹ Hist. Eccles. book v. c. 17. Ἐν ᾧ ἀποδείκνυσιν περὶ τοῦ μηδεὶν Προφήτην ἐν ἐκστάσει λαλεῖν. See the same principles in Tertullianus (against Marcion, book iv. c. 22); in Epiphanius (adv. Hæreses, book ii. Hæres. 48, c. 3); in Jerome (Proëmium in Nahum); in Basiliius the Great (Commentar. in Esaïam, proëm. 5.) ² 1 Cor. xiv. 32.

³ Luke i. 3; Acts xv. 28.

SECTION V.—*The Example of the Apostles and of their Master attests, that in their Estimation, all the Words of the Holy Books are given by God.*

In the first place, let us consider what use the apostles themselves make of the word of God, and observe in what terms they quote it. Not only do they say, *God saith*¹—*The Holy Ghost has said*²—*God said in such a prophet*;³ but observe further, when they quote what they feel are the least parts, with what reverence they speak of it, with what attention they consider each expression, with what godly confidence they insist often upon a single word, for the purpose of deducing thence the most important consequences and fundamental doctrines.

For ourselves we feel bound to avow, that nothing impresses us so strongly as this consideration;—nothing has produced in our mind such firm and abiding confidence in the entire *Theopneustia* of the Scriptures.

The preceding arguments and testimonies appear to us sufficient to have already carried conviction to every attentive mind; for ourselves we feel that if we experienced a personal want of confirmation of faith in this truth, we would not range so far for our reasons. We should be satisfied with inquiring what was holy Scripture in the estimation of the apostles of God? How far its language in their judgment was inspired? What Paul, for instance,

¹ Eph. iv. 8; Heb. i. 8.
where. ³ Rom. ix. 25.

² Acts xxiii. 25; Heb. x. 15; and else-

thought of it? For we have no pretension to be more enlightened theologians than were these twelve men. We abide by the teaching of St. Peter, and the exposition of St. Paul; and of all the existing systems which treat of the inspiration of the Scriptures, it is theirs which we are decided to prefer.

Observe the apostle Paul, when he quotes and comments upon the Scriptures. Mark how he discusses the least expressions! And often, to deduce the most important conclusions, he makes use of arguments which would be treated as puerile or absurd, if we ourselves were to employ them against the doctors of the Socinian school. Such respect for the words of the text on our part, would insure our banishment back to the sixteenth century, with its "coarse orthodoxy and antiquated theology." Remark with what reverence the apostle dwells upon the least expressions; with what sanguine confidence in the submission of the church, he there points to the use of such a word, rather than of such another word; and with what earnest affection he clings to each, until he has developed all its power.

Among the many examples which we might produce, let us in order to be brief, confine our illustration of this exclusively to the Epistle to the Hebrews. In the first place turn to chap. ii. ver. 8, and observe how, after having quoted "Thou hast put all things under his feet," the sacred writer reasons upon the force of the word *all*.

In the eleventh verse of the same chapter, in quoting from the twenty-second Psalm he dwells upon the expression, *my brethren*, to exhibit from it the human nature which the Son of God assumed.

Observe in chap. xii. 27, how in quoting the prophet Haggai, he reasons upon the use of the word *once*: "Yet once more."

From ver. 5 to 9 of the same chapter, remark how he enlarges upon the expression *my son*, from chap. iii. of Proverbs: "My son, disregard not the chastening of the Lord."

In chap. x. quoting Psalm xl., he dwells upon the expression "*Lo! I come*," as meeting, "*Thou wouldest not*."

In chap. viii. from ver. 8 to 13, quoting Jer. xxxi. 31, he reasons upon the word *new*.

In chap. iii. from ver. 7 to 19, and in chap. iv. from ver. 1 to 11, with what earnestness, quoting Psalm xcv., does he rest upon the word "*to-day*;" the expression, "*I have sworn*;" and especially upon "*my rest*;" introducing as a commentary, the words from Genesis—"And *God did rest* the seventh day."

From ver. 2 to 6 of chap. iii., observe how he dwells upon the words *servant* and *house*, taken from the book of Numbers: "My servant Moses, who is faithful in all my house."

But especially remark, in chaps. vi. and vii., the use which he consecutively makes of all the words of the cx.th Psalm,—"*The Lord sware*;" "*He*

sware by himself;" "Thou art a priest;" "A priest for ever;" "Of Melchizedec, king of Zedec;" and of "Melchizedec, king of Salem." The exposition of the doctrines contained in these expressions occupies three chapters; viz. v. vi. and vii.

But here I pause. Is it possible to avoid the conclusion, from such examples, that in the estimation of the apostle St. Paul, the Scriptures were inspired by God, even in their least expressions? Let each one of us, therefore, range himself under the authority of that man, "to whom the understanding of the mystery of Christ had been given by the Spirit of God, as to a holy apostle and prophet."¹ It is imperative upon us either to do this, or to regard him as an enthusiast; to reject in his person the testimonies of the holy Bible; or to receive with him the precious and fruitful doctrine of the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures.

And you who may read these lines, where will you decide to range yourselves? Under the apostles, or the theologians of our generation? "If any one take aught from the words of this book," attests St. John, "God shall take away his part out of the book of life, out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book;" and "if any man preach any other gospel," attests St. Paul, "let him be accursed, though it were I or an angel from heaven."

But now let us leave the apostles; prophets indeed as they are, sent by God to establish his

¹ Eph. iii. 4, 5.

kingdom, pillars of the church, mouths by which the Holy Ghost has spoken, and ambassadors of Jesus Christ: let us leave them for the present, as if they were yet too much entrenched in their Jewish traditions and rustic prejudices, and go to **THE MASTER**. Inquire of him in what estimation he held the Scriptures! This is the great question. The testimonies which we have been setting forth are, doubtless, conclusive; and the doctrine of a full and entire *Theopneustia* is as clearly taught in the Scripture as that of the resurrection of the dead. This ought to suffice for us; but we will nevertheless avow that the argument upon which we are about to enter renders all others superfluous:—how has Jesus Christ himself quoted the holy Bible! What was his mind as to the letter of the Scriptures! What use has he made of it,—he, who was the object of the Inspirer, the beginning and the end, the first and the last! He, whose Holy Spirit, says St. Peter (1 Pet. ii. 11), animated all the prophets of the Old Testament; he who was in heaven, in the bosom of the Father, at the same time that he was seen below holding converse with human kind and preaching the gospel to the poor! Were I to be asked, What do you think of the holy Scriptures! I should answer, What has my Master thought of them! How has he quoted them! What use has he made of them? What, in his estimation, were even its least parts?

Speak thyself, O Eternal Wisdom!—Uncreated Word!—Judge of judges! And whilst we proceed

to review the declarations of thy mouth, do thou display to us that majesty in which the Scriptures appeared before thee; that perfection which thou didst acknowledge in them; and especially that unchangeableness which thou hast assigned to their least iota, and in virtue of which they will survive the universe, when heaven and earth shall have passed away!

We do not hesitate to say, that when we hear the Son of God quoting the Scriptures, the question of their *Theopneustia* is, in our judgment, settled. We want no further evidence. All the declarations of the Bible unquestionably are divine; but this example of the Saviour of the world at once tells us all. This proof does not require either long or learned researches; the hand of a child can grasp it as powerfully as that of a theologian. If any doubt assail your soul, turn to the Lord of lords, and behold him kneeling before the Scriptures!

Follow Jesus in the days of his flesh. See with what serious and tender respect he holds continually the "volume of the book," to quote from its every part, and to show the import of its least details. Observe how each expression, even a word, a psalm, or an historical book, has the authority of a law. Mark with what confiding submission he receives *all the Scriptures*, without ever contesting the sacred canon; because he knows that "salvation comes of the Jews," and that under God's infallible providence the "oracles

of God was summoned into them? In it that he "loved them." From history in the text and from testimony in the Disappearing of Moses, what can he learn about what he saw?—in the desert—in the temple—and in "strange places." What does he find?—in fact, not what the learned reasoner with the sword—in his hand, in his eyes, and he is left with everlasting doubt, and the King of glory is "hidden." It is the Bible—overcome the Bible. It is Moses, the Psalms, and the Prophets, who he quotes and explains. But in what way? Eternity of verse, and word by word.

After such a spectacle, in what sad and feeble contrast do those men present themselves to what in the present day, dare to judge, gains test, and translate the Scriptures! One tremble after beholding the Son of man commanding the elements, stilling the tempest, and despoiling the world, yet filled with profound reverence for a sacred volume, declaring that he would one day return to judge by this book, the quick and the dead: one trembles, I say, and the heart bleeds when, setting foot upon the threshold of rationalist academy the eye lights upon a poor wretched learned accountable mortal seated in a professor's chair, irreverently handling the word of his God—and this, unhappily before a concourse of youths eager for knowledge and destined to be the future instructors of an entire people; capable of so much good, if led onward in the path of faith.

and of so much evil, if trained to question those Scriptures which they must one day preach! With what arrogant self-complacency do these deluded men parade the phantasmagoria of their hypotheses! They retrench, they add, they praise, they blame, and they pity the simplicity of those who reading the Bible as Jesus Christ himself read it, become like him attached to it, and see no error in the word of God. Where Jesus Christ had no doubts, they decide what interlineations or retrenchments holy Scripture shall undergo; they lop off whole chapters which they understand not; and they denounce it as containing mistakes, ill-grounded or inconclusive arguments, prejudices, rash assertions, and ignorant vulgar conceits!

The Lord pardon the necessity of recording the fearful dilemma; but the alternative is inevitable. Either Jesus Christ exaggerated and raved when he thus quoted the Scriptures, or these daring and unhappy men unwittingly blaspheme the Divine Majesty. Deeply painful it is to us to pen such a sentence. God is our witness, that our first desire was to forbear the expression of it, and afterwards to blot it out; but we can venture to affirm under a deep sense of what becomes us, that it is in obedience and in love we have retained it. Alas! after the lapse of a few years the teachers and their pupils will be consigned to a common tomb; they will wither like the green herb; but not one particle of a letter of this divine book will then have passed away; and as certain as the Bible is truth, and has

though the Son of the world, so certainly we see the Son of Man come in the cloud heaven, and judge by this eternal word the thoughts of all men.* All flesh is grass, and all glory of man is as the flower of grass: the green withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away; the Word of the Lord endureth for ever. And is the word which is preached unto us.—[the word which will judge us.]

We shall now proceed to complete our proof starting under this point of view the ministry of Jesus-Christ. Let us follow him from age of twelve years to his descent into the tomb, or rather to his ascent to the clouds in which he departed; and in all the course of this inquiry let us see what were the Scriptures in the estimation of Him who "upholdeth all things by the word of his power."

Let us first observe him when twelve years old. He has increased, like a child of human nature, in wisdom and stature; he is in the midst of the Jewish law, and he moves among all who hear him. He ~~will~~ ^{can} know the Scriptures without having studied them.

Observe him at the time of entering upon his ministry. He is filled with the Holy Ghost; he is led into a wilderness, there to sustain, like the first Adam in Eden, a mysterious conflict with the powers of darkness. The Unclean spirit ventures to approach, and seeks to overthrow him; but he

* *Mat. ii. 10; John xi. 49; Matt. xxv. 31.*

² *John vii. 15.*

does the Son of God, he who was come to destroy the works of the devil, resist him? With the Bible only. The sole weapon in his divine hands during this threefold assault, was the sword of the Spirit, the Bible. Three times successively he quotes the book of Deuteronomy;¹ at each new temptation, He, the Word made flesh, defends himself by a sentence from the oracles of God, and even by a sentence whose whole force lies in the employment of one or two words: in the first place, of these words (ἄρτος μόνον) *bread alone*; afterwards of these, *thou shalt not tempt the Lord* (οὐκ ἐκπειράσεις Κύριον); and finally of these two words (Θεόν προσκυνήσεις) *thou shalt worship God*.

What an example for us! His only answer, his only defence, is—"It is written." "Get thee hence, Satan, for it is written,"—and as soon as this terrible and mysterious conflict ended, angels came and ministered unto him.

But let us further and particularly remark, that of such authority is each word in the Scriptures in the estimation of the Son of Man, that the Unclean spirit himself, (a being so mighty for evil, who knew the Saviour's estimate of the words of the Bible,) could not devise a more secure way of operating upon his will, than by citing (partially however) a verse of the ninety-first Psalm, and immediately Jesus to confound him, contents himself with once more replying, "It is written."

Thus commenced his priestly ministry—by the

¹ Deut. viii. 3; vi. 16; vi. 13; x. 20. Matt. iv. 1—11.

use of the Scriptures. And thus it was that, soon afterwards, he entered upon his prophetic ministry—by the use of the Scriptures.

Let us further follow him when, engaged in his work, he goes from place to place doing good; exercising, in poverty, his creative power always for the relief of others, and never for himself. He speaks, and things have being; he casts out devils, stills the tempest, and raises the dead. But in the midst of all these marvels, observe how great is his regard for the Scriptures. The Word is always with him. He bears it about, not in his hands, (he knows it entirely,) but in his memory and matchless heart. Observe him, when he speaks of it:—when he unfolds the sacred volume, it is as if a door in heaven were opened, to enable us to hear the voice of Jehovah. With what reverence, with what subjection, does he set forth its contents, commenting upon, and quoting them word by word! This was now all his business—to heal and to preach the Scriptures; as it was afterwards to die and accomplish them!

Observe him, “as his custom was,” entering a synagogue on the sabbath-day; for (we are told) “he taught in their assemblies.”¹ He enters that of Nazareth. What does he there? He, “the eternal Wisdom, whom the Lord prepared from everlasting when there were no depths, before the mountains were settled, or the hills brought forth:”² he rises from his seat, takes the Bible, opens at

¹ Luke iv. 15, 16.

² Prov. viii. 22—25.

Isaiah and reads a few sentences, then closes the book, sits down, and whilst the eyes of all assembled were fixed on him he says,—“This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears.”¹

Observe him traversing Galilee. What does he there? Still occupied with “the volume of the book,” explaining it line after line, and word by word, and claiming our respect for its least expressions as much as he would for the law of “ten commandments” uttered upon Mount Sinai.

Observe him again in Jerusalem at the pool of Bethesda. What does he call upon the people to do?—“Search the Scriptures.” (John v. 39.)

Observe him in the holy place, in the midst of which he does not shrink from declaring, “that in this place there is One greater than the temple.” (Matt. xii. 6.) Follow him before the Pharisees and Sadducees whilst alternately he rebukes both as he had done Satan, in these words,—“It is written.”

Hear him answering the Sadducees, who denied the resurrection of the body. How does he refute them? By ONE SINGLE WORD from an historical passage in the Bible; by a single verb in the present tense, instead of that same verb in the past. “Ye do greatly err, (said he to them,) BECAUSE YE KNOW NOT THE Scriptures.” “Have ye not read what God has declared unto you, in saying, I am the God of Abraham?” It is thus that he proves to them the doctrine of the resurrection. God, on

¹ Luke iv. 21.

Mount Sinai, 400 years after the death of Abraham, said to Moses, not "I was," but "I am the God of Abraham;"¹ I am so now (אֲנִי אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם), which the Holy Ghost translates, *'Εγώ εἰμι ὁ Θεὸς Ἀβραάμ*). There is therefore a resurrection; for God is not the God of a few handfuls of dust, of the dead, of annihilated humanity: he is the God of the living. Those you speak of therefore live before him.

Observe him afterwards among the Pharisees. It is still by the letter of the word that he confounds them.

Some few who had already followed him to the borders of Judæa beyond Jordan, came and inquired his doctrines respecting marriage and divorce. What did the Lord Jesus do? He might certainly have answered with authority, and given his own laws. Is he not himself King of kings and Lord of lords? But not so: it is to the Bible he appeals in order to show the foundation of the doctrine, and this he does in a few simple words taken from a purely historical passage in the book of Genesis.² "HAVE YOU NOT READ, that he who made them at the beginning, made a man and a woman; so that they are no longer two, but one single flesh? What therefore God has joined let not man separate."³

But hear him especially, when in the temple he desires to prove to other Pharisees, from the Scriptures, the divinity of the expected Messiah. Here again, in order to demonstrate it, he lays stress upon

¹ Matt. xxii. 31, 32.

² Gen. i. 27; ii. 24.

³ Matt. xix. 4, 5, 6.

the use of A SINGLE WORD, selected from the book of Psalms. "If Messiah be the Son of David (he observes), how then doth David BY THE SPIRIT call him LORD, when (in Psalm cx.) he said, The Lord said unto my LORD, Sit thou on my right hand? If David call him Lord, how is he his son?"¹

How was it, that among the Pharisees there were none to answer him? What! would you insist upon a single word, and this too in a sentence taken from an eminently lyric composition, in which the royal poet might without risk indulge a fervid style, and use exaggerated expressions, and words which doubtless he had not duly weighed in his mind ere he put them into his psalmody? Would you pursue the method, at once fanatical and servile, of minutely interpreting each expression? Would you revere even to the letter of the Scriptures? Would you ground a doctrine upon a word?

Yes, answers the Saviour, I would—yes, I would rest on a word, because that word is from God, and with one word he created light. To cut short all your objections, I declare to you that it was BY THE SPIRIT that David wrote all the words of his Psalms; and, I ask you, how, if the Messiah is his Son, David could BY THE SPIRIT call him Lord, when he said, "The Lord said unto my Lord?"

Students of the word of God, and you especially who are designed to be its ministers, and who as a preparation for preaching it, desire in the first place,

TO PREPARE I HAD IN MIND THE FIRST PART OF WHAT IS THE EXPLANATION OF WHAT MOUNTAIN WAS THE INTERPRETATION AND WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THE GOSPEL TO THE PEOPLE AND TO THE WORLD.

But there is more. Let us further look into what is in his mind. He there made his soul in offering for sin. All his bones were laid in dust: he was buried in the water: his heart was laid well hidden in the midst of his bowels: his tongue came to the dust of his mouth: and he was about to render his spirit to his Father. But what did he first do? He wrote in only his existing energies to write a Psalm which the Church of Israel has sung in her prayers through a thousand years and which repeats in succession all his sufferings and prayers. *Em. Em. Amen Amen.* "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" He can even more: and let us well remark it. There remained the little work of Scripture unaccomplished: which was to be given him in that work. The Holy Spirit had declared in the Psalm that a thousand years before. "After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, I thirst. — And when Jesus had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished! bowed his head, and gave up the ghost." Could David, when he chanted this Sixty-ninth Psalm upon Shushan, and the twenty-second upon Aijeleth — could David, we ask, have known the prophetic sense of each of these expressions! — of the hands

¹ Ps. xlii. 14—15.

² John xii. 25, 29.

and feet pierced, of the gall and vinegar administered, of a vesture appropriated by lot, of people shaking the head and pouting the lip in derision? It matters little to us whether he understood it—the Holy Ghost did; and David, says Jesus Christ, spake BY THE SPIRIT. The heavens and the earth are to pass away; but there is not in this book the particle of a letter which will pass away without being fulfilled. (John x. 35.)

Nevertheless, we are called to observe something yet more striking, if it be possible. Jesus Christ rises from the tomb, he has conquered death; he is about to return to the Father, to reassume that glory which he had with him before the world was. Follow him in his remaining rapid movements upon the earth. What words will flow from that mouth to which utterance has been restored by resurrection from the dead? Words of holy Scripture. Again he quotes, explains, and preaches it. In the first place, we behold him on the way to Emmaus, accompanying Cleopas and his friend; next, in the upper room; and afterwards on the borders of the lake. What does he do? He expounds the Scriptures; beginning at Moses, and continuing through the Prophets and Psalms, he shows them the things concerning himself, he opens their minds to understand them, and causes their hearts to burn whilst talking with them.¹

But we have not yet done. All these quotations demonstrate in what estimation the Bible was held

¹ Luke xxiv. 27, 44.

by Him "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge," (Col. ii. 3,) and "by whom all things subsist," (Col. i. 17.) But we must further produce two declarations and one example of our Lord, touching the letter of Scripture:—

"It is easier," he has said, "for heaven and earth to pass, than for one particle of a letter (*κεράλα*) of the Law to fail;"¹ and by the term *law*, Jesus Christ understood the whole of the Scriptures, and even more particularly the book of Psalms.²

What words could be conceived which would express with more force and precision the principle we are maintaining than do the foregoing? I mean the principle of the entire *Theopneustia* and everlasting character of all the parts, and even of the very letter of the Scripture. Students of the word of God, behold then the theology of your Master! Be such theologians as he was; have the same Bible as the Son of God!

But let us hear another declaration, pronounced by our Lord in his sermon on the mount:—

"Until heaven and earth pass away, there shall not pass *from the law* a single iota, nor the tittle of a letter," (Matt. v. 18.) All the words of THE SCRIPTURES, even to the least letter and particle of a letter, are equal to the words of *Jesus Christ HIMSELF*; for he has also said, "Heaven and earth shall one day pass away, but my words shall not pass away," (Luke xxi. 33).

¹ Luke xvi. 17.

² John x. 34; xii. 34.

The men who oppose these doctrines ask us, if we go so far as to pretend that holy Scripture is a law from God even in its words, as hyssop or an oak is the work of God even in its leaves? We answer, with the fathers of the Church, Yes, we do;—or rather, Jesus Christ our Saviour and Master, lifts his hand to heaven, and replies, Yes, even in its words—even to (ἰῶτα ἐν, ἡ μία κεφαλαία) a single iota or particle of a letter!

Having recorded these two declarations, let us, finally, consider one of the last examples of our Lord, to which we have not hitherto referred.

It is still, Jesus Christ who is about to quote the Scriptures; but this he does in claiming for their least words such an authority as compels us to range ourselves among the most ardent disciples of a verbal inspiration; nor do we think that, if all the writings of our theologians even the most decided in orthodoxy were produced, there could be found among them the example of so profound a reverence for the letter of the Scriptures and the plenitude of their *Theopneustia*.

It was on a winter's day. Jesus was walking in the colonnade of the Eastern Porch of the Temple; the Jews come round about him; and he then (John x. 27) says to them, "I give eternal life to my sheep; they shall never perish, neither shall any one pluck them out of my hand. I and my Father are one." They were amazed at his language; but he continued to rebuke them unmoved, until at length the Jews accused him of blasphemy, and took up

stones to stone him, saying, "We stone thee, because, being a man, thou makest thyself God."¹

We would now invite especial attention to the several features of the Lord's reply to this. He proceeds to quote an expression from one of the Psalms, and on this single expression to found the whole of his doctrine: "for," says St. John (chap. v. 18), "he made himself equal with God." To defend the most sublime and mysterious of his doctrines, and to commend to our belief the most marvellous of his pretensions, he rests upon an expression of the seventy-second Psalm. But, mark! previously to uttering this expression, he deliberately pauses for a moment, and then, in a solemn parenthesis, adds with impressive authority,—"*and the Scripture cannot be destroyed!*" (*καὶ οὐ δύναται λυθῆναι ἡ γραφή.*)

Have we sufficiently felt the force of this? Not only is our Lord's argument founded entirely upon the use which the Psalmist has made of a single expression; and not only does he proceed to build upon it the most amazing of his doctrines; but further, in thus quoting the book of Psalms, and in order to enable us to comprehend that in his estimation the book is wholly and throughout a writing of the Holy Ghost, in which each word ought to be to us a law, Jesus calls it by the name of LAW, and says to the Jews, "Is it not written in your law, I said ye are gods?" These words occur in the middle of a psalm; they might appear

¹ John x. 27, and following verses.

to have been the result of inconsiderate fervour on the part of the prophet Asaph, or a fanciful creation of his poetic genius. And if the plenary inspiration of *all that is written* were not admitted, we might be tempted to view them as indiscreet, and to think that their imprudent use by the psalmist might have led the people into customs elsewhere rebuked by the word of God, and into idolatrous notions. And here we would once more inquire, how did it happen that some rationalist scribe, of the Israelitish universities, was not found under Solomon's porch to say to him, "Lord, you cannot take that expression as your authority. The use which Asaph has made of it may have been neither considerate nor becoming. Although inspired in the thoughts of his piety, he doubtless did not weigh his least words with jealous apprehension as to the use which might be made of them a thousand years after he should cease to exist. It would therefore be rash to pretend to lay stress upon them?"

But now mark how the Saviour anticipates the profane temerity of such an evasion. He solemnly calls to mind that he had just uttered words which would be blasphemy in the mouth of an archangel,—*"I and my Father are one;"* but he interrupts himself, and immediately remarks, *"Is it not written in your law, I said ye are gods?"* He then pauses, and fixing his eyes with authority upon the Doctors who surrounded him, adds, *"THE SCRIPTURE CANNOT BE DESTROYED."* As if he had

said, Beware! there is not in the sacred books either an expression which can be questioned, or a word which can be neglected. That which I quote to you from the eighty-second Psalm, is traced by the hand of him who made the heavens. If therefore he has been pleased to give the name of gods to men, in so far as they were the anointed, and types of the true Christ—of the supreme Anointed One — being at the same time fully aware that they “would die like men;” how much more will it become me to take to myself the titles of, the Everlasting Father¹—Emmanuel—the God-man, doing the works of my Father as him whom God the Father hath sealed?

We will here ask every serious reader, (and we wish it to be remarked that our argument is entirely independent of the orthodox or Socinian interpretations of these words of Jesus Christ)—we will here ask—Is it possible to admit that the Being who made such a use of the Scriptures, DID NOT BELIEVE IN THEIR PLENARY AND VERBAL INSPIRATION? And had he imagined that the words of the Bible were left to the free choice and pious fantasies of the sacred writers, would he ever have resorted to the thought of grounding such arguments on such an expression? The Lord Jesus our Saviour and our Judge believed therefore in the most complete inspiration of the Scriptures; and for him the first rule of all interpretation, and the commencement of every exposition, was this

¹ Isa. ix. 5; viii. 14; John vi. 27.

simple maxim applied to the least expressions of the written word, "AND THE SCRIPTURE CANNOT BE DESTROYED."

May the Prince of life, the Light of the world, make us subject to his authority ! What he believed, let us receive. What he revered, let us revere. Let that word, to which his heart of redeeming love and all the thoughts of his holy humanity were subject, let that word, we say, be bound upon our defiled hearts, and gain the mastery over every emotion of our fallen nature. Let us seek God in its least expressions ; nourish with it daily all the roots of our being ; that we may be like a tree planted by running waters, which yields its fruit in season, and whose leaves never wither. Let us, in a word, be like the just One in the Psalms, who so delighted in the law of the Lord that he meditated therein day and night. Then will the Holy Ghost, who wrote it word by word, also trace it with his almighty finger upon the tables of our heart ; and cause us efficaciously to hear these words of God our Saviour, "Be thou healed, and saved : son, thy sins are forgiven thee ; thy faith hath saved thee, go in peace ! To him that believeth, all things are possible."

CHAPTER VII.

FINALLY, TO CONCLUDE.

FROM all that we have said, it is evident that the christian world contains but two systems of religion:—that which is above every thing, and that which is above the Bible. The former was established by Jesus Christ; the latter that of the various all denominations and times.

The motto of the former is—"All that is inspired by God, even to a single iota of a letter: the Scripture cannot be altered."

The expression of the latter is—"God is amenable to human judgment."

Instead of setting the Bible above the contrary either knowledge, or reason, or traditions of men, or some new inspiration, they place it in a latter place above the Bible. Hence the error of rationalists and their false religion.

They correct the word of God, they contradict, or they interdict; they be irreverently read by their pupils, and they prevent its perusal.

The rationalists for instance, who profess Judaism, set above the Bible their own reason, at least that of the

fourth, fifth, and sixth centuries; that is to say, the human traditions of their Targums, the Mishna and the Gemara of their two enormous Talmuds. This is their Alcoran; beneath whose weight they have crushed the Law and the Prophets.

The rationalists who profess the religion of Rome, will in their turn set above the Bible, not their own reason, but in the first place, the reason of the seventh, eighth, ninth, tenth, eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries, which they call *tradition*; (that is to say, the reason of Denis the Less, Hincmar, Radbert, Lanfranc, Damascenus, Anastasius the librarian, Burkardt, Ives de Chartres, Gratian, and Isidore the merchant); and finally of a priest, generally an Italian, whom they call *Pope*, and whom they declare *infallible in the definition of the things of faith*.¹ Does the Bible require that men should worship the Virgin, do homage to angels, purchase pardons, adore images, confess in the ears of a priest; does it forbid marriages, prohibit meats, teach us to pray in a foreign language, interdict the Scriptures to the people, and have a sovereign pontiff?² And when it speaks of a future

¹ This is the doctrine of the Ultramontanes, maintained both by the Popes (Pascal, Pius, Leon, Pelagius, Boniface, Gregory,) and councils. Bellarmin, Duval, and Arsdekin, affirm that it is the sentiment of all theologians of any distinction. "Hæc doctrina communis est inter omnes notæ theologos." (Arsdekin, Theol. vol. i. p. 118. Antwerp, 1682.) ² "Prohibemus etiam, ne libros Veteris Testamenti aut Novi laici permittantur habere; nisi forte psalterium, vel breviarium pro divinis officiis, aut horas beatæ Mariæ, aliquis ex devotione habere velit. Sed ne præmissos libros habeant in vulgari translatos, arctissimè inhibemus." (The xivth canon of the Council

Rome, is it otherwise (in which all the first fathers of the church agree,) than in designating it as the abode of the man of sin : as the centre of a tremendous apostasy ; as a Babylon, drunk with the blood of the saints and the witnesses of Jesus, which has made all nations drunk with the wine of the wrath of her fornication ; as the mother of harlots and of the abominations of the earth ?

Those rationalists who profess a corrupt Protestantism, and who reject the doctrines of the Reformation, will set above the Bible, if not the reason of Socinus and Priestley, of Eichhorn and Paulus, of Strauss and Hegel, at least their own. The word of God, say they, is mingled with error. They try it, and correct it ; and it is with the Bible in their hands, that they come and say—there is no divinity in Christ, no resurrection of the body, no Holy Ghost, no devil, no spirits, no hell, no atonement in the death of Jesus, no innate corruption in man, no eternal punishments, no miracle in the deeds, and (must I even add ?) no reality in Jesus Christ.

Finally, those rationalists who profess mysticism of Toulouse, under Pope Gregory IX. the year 1229. Concilia Labbei, vol. ii. pars 1. Paris. 1671.)

¹ 2 Thess. ii. 1—12 ; Rev. xiii. 1—8 ; xviii. 1—24. ² St. Jerome, *Exhortation to Marcella, to induce her to emigrate from Rome to Bethlehem.* — *Lege Apocalypsim Johannis ; et quid de muliere purpuratâ, &c. . . septem montibus. et Babylonis cantetur exitu, contuere, &c.* Tertullian. — *Sic et Babylon apud Johannem nostrum Romanæ urbis figura est, &c.* (*Adv. Judæos.* Parisiis, 1675.) St. Chrysostom, (*Hom. iv. in 2 Epist. ad Thessal. c. 2.*) “What prevented,” says he, (in his time) “the manifestation of the man of sin, was the Roman empire.” *Τοῦτ' ὅτι καὶ ἀρχὴ καὶ Ῥωμαίων.* *Ὅταν ἀρθῇ ἐκ παροῦ, τότε ἐκείνους ἴξεται.*

(the Illuminated, the Quakers, the Paracelcists, the Bourignonists, the Labadists, and the Bœhmists) will set above the sacred text their own hallucinations, their inward monitor, their revelations from Christ, who (they say) is within them. They will speak with contempt of the letter of Scripture, of its literal sense, of gospel facts, of the man Jesus or an external Christ (as they term it), of the cross of Golgotha, of preaching, worship, and of sacraments. They are above these carnal helps ! Hence their dislike of the doctrines of the judicial justice of God, the reality of sin, of divine wrath against wickedness, of grace, of election, of atonement, of the imputed righteousness of Christ, and of future punishments.

Disciples of the Saviour, hear him in his Word ; it is there he speaks to us ; there is our reason, there our wisdom, there our inspiration and safe tradition ; it is the lamp of our feet. " Sanctify me, O Lord, by thy truth : thy word is truth ! "

Let our reason then employ all its powers under the guidance of God, to ascertain in the first place that the Scriptures are from him, and afterwards to make them our study. May he guide us daily more closely to his divine oracles, to correct our reason by them, not to correct them by it ; to search therein the meaning of God, not to substitute our own ; to present ourselves before the Word as a gentle docile learner, and not as a vaunting vain-glorious sibyl. Let it be our daily prayer while these shades of night surround us, as of the

child of the tabernacle, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth!" The law of the Lord is perfect; the words of the Lord are pure words; it is "as silver, tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times."¹

And on the other hand, let us seek the Holy Spirit; let us be anointed yea baptized of the Holy One; it is the Spirit alone which will lead us into all the truth of Scripture; which, through it, will shed the love of God abroad in our hearts, and bear witness with our spirit that we are the children of God, by enabling us to realize the promises of our inheritance, and giving us the earnest of our adoption. In vain should we during eighteen hundred years have had this Scripture in our possession; as have the Jews: without the Spirit we could not have understood therein the things of the Spirit of God; "they would be foolishness unto us, for the natural man receiveth not the things of God, neither can he receive them, because they are spiritually discerned." But at the same time, in always distinguishing the power of the Spirit from the Scripture, let us be careful never to separate them. Let it be always before the Word, in the Word, and by the Word, that we seek this divine Spirit. It is by the Word that the Spirit acts, enlightens, moves, casts down, and raises up. His constant operation is to give our minds understanding in the Word, and to induce us to love it.

The Bible therefore is from God in all its parts.

It contains undoubtedly many passages of which

¹ Psalm xii. 6.

we perceive neither the utility nor the beauty ; but the light of the last day will at once unveil their splendour, and like the effect of light borne into the recesses of a crystalline cavern, the glory of the day of Jesus will spread refulgence over all, penetrating the entire Scriptures, disclosing to us the yet hidden treasures, and causing them to shine with dimless and resplendent lustre. Then will the beauty, wisdom, adaptation, and harmony of all their revelations, be manifested ; and the sight will fill the elect of God with rapturous admiration, with ever increasing emotions of love and joy unspeakable.

The history of the past in connexion with this subject, ought to lead us even now to anticipate that of the future ; and we may judge by what has been accomplished, of the glory of the light which will be shed on the Scriptures at the second coming of Jesus Christ.

Observe already what vivid brightness was cast upon all parts of the Old Testament, at the first appearing of the Son of God ; and learn from this, what will be the radiance of the Scriptures at his second advent. Then the plan of God will be consummated ; then will our Lord and King, the "fairer than the children of men, borne on the word of truth, and meekness, and righteousness," be revealed from heaven ; then will his light fill the hearts of his ransomed ones, and the imposing grandeur of the work of redemption will be exhibited in all its glory to the gaze of the children of God.

Observe already how many chapters of Scripture,

at the time of Jeremiah,—or later, in the long line of the Maccabees, and during the existence of the second temple, from Malachi to John the Baptist,—observe we say how many chapters of Scripture, which are now sparkling before our eyes with most divine radiance, must in those days have appeared dim and insignificant to the eyes of the rationalists of the ancient synagogue. How vulgar, puerile, and devoid of learning and utility, must have appeared to them many chapters and verses which at this day feed our faith, fill us with admiration at the majestic unity of the Scriptures, cause our tears to flow, and which have brought so many weary and heavy-laden souls to the feet of Jesus! What said they as to understanding Isa. liii.?—in response, doubtless, with the Ethiopian, under queen Candace: “How can I, except some one explain it to me?—of whom speaketh the prophet, of himself, or some other man?” What end must have appeared to be served in the mysterious history of Melchizedec? Why those long details respecting the tabernacle, Aaron’s garments, things clean and unclean, worship, and the sacrifices? What was the meaning of the words, “the legs¹ thereof shall not be broken?” In what sense could they have regarded Psalm xxii., lxix., and other psalms? “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?”—“They pierced my hands and my feet.” Why (must they have thought) does David in his Psalms occupy us at

¹ The translation is *bone* in the English version. See Exod. xii. 46, and Numb. ix. 12.

such length with the common details of his adventurous life? When moreover did they divide his garments and cast lots for his vesture? What mean the words, "All they that see me wag their heads, saying, He trusted in the Lord that he would deliver him, seeing he delighted in him?" What is signified by the vinegar and the gall?—"They gave me gall to eat, and when I was thirsty, they gave me vinegar to drink." What is the sense of this exaggerated and inexplicable expression, "I hid not my face from shame and spitting. They smote me on the cheeks, and the ploughers ploughed upon my back?" And what could the prophet mean by saying "A virgin shall conceive?" What again is this lowly King seated on an ass?—"Zion, behold thy King cometh to deliver thee, lowly and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass." And whose grave is alluded to in the sentence, "His grave was ordained with the wicked; but he was with the rich in his death?"

How strange and little worthy of the Lord must all these expressions, and so many others, have appeared to the presumptuous scribes of bygone days! "What humanity, what individuality, what adaptation to passing scenes!" they would exclaim, if we may put into their mouths the current terms of our own day. No doubt, very learned systems and abundant conjecture about the intention of the prophets who wrote these details were professed in the academies of that period; nought however could be discerned in their language, but

the vulgar stamp of the exclusively personal circumstances by which they supposed them to be affected.

But what were the true disciples of the word of life then doing?—Hezekiah, Daniel, Josiah, Nehemiah, and Ezra—our brethren in the same hope and faith, with the holy women who hoped in God and looked for the consolation of Israel? Oh! like angels of light, you were reverently contemplating the depths of these truths, and awaiting their unveiling.—Yes, they waited! They knew that most insignificant passage in their eyes, might be pregnant (as one of the fathers of the church observed) with “mountains of doctrine.” On account “searching to discover,” as St. Peter says “what the Spirit of Christ, which was in the prophets, had caused them to write concerning time and circumstances of the sufferings of the Messiah, and the glory which should follow,” they did not doubt that at a later period, when time and events should have unveiled these mysteries, they would be found marvellously glorious in the light of the Divine mind, and rich in all the consolations of the gospel. The day was coming when, after the Messiah’s first appearing, the life in the kingdom of God would be greater than the greatest of the prophets. That day has dawned. But we ourselves also know that after the second appearance of Jesus, the day will come when the least of the redeemed would be greater in knowledge than were such as Augustine, Calvin, Jonathan

Edwards, Pascal, and Leighton; for then the ears of babes will hear and their eyes will see things which even the apostles desired to see and have not seen, and to hear and have not heard.

Well! what prophets and saints did concerning passages then obscure to them but now made manifest to us, we will do with regard to passages which as yet we cannot comprehend, but which will soon be clearly revealed to the heirs of eternal life, when all prophecy shall be accomplished, and when Jesus shall appear in the clouds in the last manifestation of his glorious coming.

With what splendour have many passages, psalms, prophecies, types, and descriptions presented themselves to our view as soon as we have discovered the beauty which had previously been veiled! What gospel truth has come forth from them! What unfolding of redeeming love! Let us therefore await similar but more glorious revelations, on the day when our Master will again descend from heaven; "for," says Irenæus, "there are in the Scriptures difficulties which, through the grace of God we are now able to resolve; but there are others which we leave to him, not only as respects this generation, but those to come, in order that it may be God perpetually teaching, and man perpetually learning from God the things that are of God."¹

If the light of grace has cast a shade over that of nature, what will it be when the light of glory in

¹ Irenæus, *adv. Hæres.* book ii. c. 47.—"ἵνα ὁ Θεὸς διδάσκη, ἄνθρωπος δὲ διὰ παντὸς μανθάνῃ παρὰ Θεοῦ."

its turn shall cast a shade upon that of grace? What stars of the first magnitude now unseen will light up at the approach of that great day, in the firmament of the Scriptures? and when at last it shall burst unveiled upon the redeemed, what harmonies, what heavenly tints, what new glories, what unknown splendours, will be revealed to the heirs of eternal life?

Then shall we see the full meaning of many prophecies, facts, and instructions, whose divine character is now only seen in detached features, but whose evangelical beauty will at that day be fully displayed. Then will be known the import of those parables, even now so impressive, of the fig-tree—of the master returning from the far country—of the bridegroom and bride—of the net drawn to the shore of eternity—of Lazarus—of the guests—of the talents—of the husbandmen,—of the virgins—and of the marriage-feast. Then will be known all the glory of such expressions as these :—"The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand until thine enemies be made thy footstool:"—"Thy people, Lord, shall be willing in the day when thou shalt assemble thine army in holy pomp:"—"The dew of thy youth shall be to thee from the dawn of the day:"—"He shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath:"—"He shall wound the head of him who rules over a great country:"—"He shall drink of the brook in the way, therefore shall he lift up the head."

Then also thou wilt reveal thyself to us in all thy glory. Lord Jesus, Saviour, Comforter, Friend

of the desolate, our Lord and our God ! Thou who hast seen death ; but who art " He that is alive for evermore ! " Then will all the knowledge of heaven be centered in thyself. This was ever the wisdom of the Holy Ghost which came down from heaven ; and always that of Scripture, for " the testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of prophecy." It is already the entire life of the saints : " their eternal life is to know thee." Oh ! thanks be to God for his gift of the Scriptures—for his unspeakable gift !

The traveller who planted the first chesnut in this our western soil, little knew as he committed the solitary kernel which he had brought with him to the earth how innumerable and mighty would be the forests one day covering the land, and charming its inhabitants with their beauteous foliage ; our people under their shelter celebrating their national festivals ; kings reviewing armies beneath their bowery growth ; our children playing around their trunks ; every tree itself producing from year to year, millions of kernels similar to that from which they sprang, bearing also within them the embryo germs of thousands of forests in thousands of generations !

Thus the christian traveller arriving from the church militant, at his heavenly country, at the city of his God, the house of his Father, with one of the thousands of passages of the holy Bible in his hand, knows that he is the bearer of the infinite in the finite, a germ from God of which he may doubtless already see the partial development and glory, but of which he cannot yet tell all the grandeur. It

may be the least of all seeds ; but he knows that out of it will come forth a tree, an everlasting tree, under whose branches the inhabitants of heaven will come and take shelter. In many of the passages about his Saviour, he has hitherto seen the germ alone enclosed as it were in a coarser rind ; but he also knows that once admitted into Jerusalem above, and brought under the rays of the Sun of Righteousness, he will find these expressions of Eternal Wisdom radiant with a brightness of which the Lamb is the glorious light, and vivid with splendour which is now latent and still enveloped in their outer shell. Then with ineffable emotions of gratitude and bliss he will discover adaptations, harmony, and glory, of which he had only a glimpse or reverent hope while here below. Prepared before the foundation of the world, in the eternal councils of God, and in germ deposited in his Book of life, their full lustre will shine forth under that new heaven, and for that new earth, where righteousness shall dwell.

All the written word is then inspired by God.

“Open thou mine eyes, O Lord, that I may see the wonders of thy law!”

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